THE GREAT WAR

Harold A. Leavitt
11/12/34

Photo: Vandyk

FIELD-MARSHAL EARL HAIG

THE GREAT WAR

BY

THE RIGHT HON.
WINSTON S. CHURCHILL, C.H., M.P.

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CHAPTER XXXV

THE ORIGIN OF TANKS AND SMOKE

Crux of the War Problem—Smoke the Ally of Steel Plate—Admiral Bacon's 15-inch Howitzers—The First Attempt to make a Tank—The Second Attempt—Fate of the Second Attempt to Make a Tank—The Duke of Westminster's Dinner—The Landships Committee—The Tanks Ordered—Credit and Responsibility—Tanks in Jeopardy, June, 1915—Lord Dundonald and his Grandfather's Secret—He Reveals It—Smoke—The Conception of the Battle of Cambrai—Surprise—Premature Exposure of the Tanks—Their Mishandling by G.H.Q.—The Tanks Established.

MECHANICAL not less than strategic conditions had combined to produce at this early period in the war a deadlock both on sea and land. The strongest fleet was paralysed in its offensive by the menace of the mine and the torpedo. The strongest army was arrested in its advance by the machine gun. On getting into certain positions necessary for offensive action, ships were sunk by under-water explosions, and soldiers were cut down by streams of bullets. This was the evil which lay at the root of all our perplexities.

It was no use endeavouring to remedy this evil on sea by keeping the ships in harbour, or on land by squandering the lives and valour of endless masses of men. The mechanical danger must be overcome by a mechanical remedy. Once this was done, both the stronger fleet and the stronger armies would regain their normal offensive rights. Until this were done, both would be baffled and all would suffer.

Crux of the War Problem.

If we master the fact that this was the crux of the war problem, as it was plainly apparent from the end of 1914 onwards, the next steps in thought will be found equally simple. Something must be discovered which would render ships immune from the torpedo, and make it unnecessary for soldiers to bare their breasts to the machine-gun hail. This very definite evil and ugly fact that a torpedo or mine would blow a hole in the bottom of a ship, and that any one bullet out of countless streams discharged by machinery would fatally pierce the body of a man, was not one which could be ignored. It must be conquered if the war was to progress and victory to be won. The remedy when stated appeared to be so simple that it was for months or even years scouted and disregarded by many of the leading men in both the great fighting professions.

Reduced to its rudiments, it consisted in interposing a thin plate of steel between the side of the ship and the approaching torpedo, or between the body of a man and the approaching bullet.

Here then was one of the great secrets of the war and of the world in 1915. But hardly anyone would believe it. This sovereign, priceless key to inestimable blessings lay there in the dust for everyone to see, and almost all the great responsible authorities stood gazing at it with vacant eyes. Those who perceived it, soldiers, sailors, airmen, civilians, were a class apart, outside the currents of orthodox opinion, and for them was reserved the long and thankless struggle to convert authority and to procure action. Eventually they succeeded.

On sea authority intervened at an early stage: on land the process was more painful. The Monitor and the "bulged" or "blistered ship" were the beginning of the torpedo-proof fleet, the Tank was the beginning of the bullet-proof army. Both of these devices, when the difficulties of their application were surmounted, would have restored to the stronger fleet or army the offensive powers of which they had been deprived

by new mechanical developments. But when at last Monitors, "Blisters" and Tanks had been devised and built and were placed under Naval and Military Commanders-in-Chief, the usefulness of both was largely thrown away. The Monitors—the original types of which were no doubt far from perfect—were not developed, and were never employed as a part of any great naval offensive, while the Tanks were improvidently exposed to the enemy long before they were numerous enough to produce decisive effects. Nevertheless the Tanks survived to play their part.

Smoke the Ally of Steel Plate.

Closely allied to the problem of finding ways of attacking by sea and land lay the great subject of Smoke. To make an artificial fog which would blanket off a particular area so that men or ships could traverse it or occupy it without the enemy seeing where to shoot at them, was a second most simple and obvious expedient. Smoke was the ally and comrade of the Steel Plate. They went forward together, each helping the other and multiplying their joint effect.

And behind smoke lay a more baleful development—Poisonous Smoke: smoke that would not only obstruct the vision but destroy the eye; smoke that would not only blindfold the machine gunner but strangle him.

All these ideas had already dawned before the year 1914 was over.

* * * *

In the early weeks of the war the Admiralty had been asked to assume responsibility for the defence of Britain against aerial attack. This necessitated the posting on the Belgian and French coasts of Air Squadrons based on Dunkirk to attack any Zeppelin or aeroplane shed which the enemy might establish in the invaded territories. This led to the formation of armoured-car squadrons to protect the advanced bases which our naval aeroplanes might require to use. The enemy, harassed by the armoured cars, cut gaps in the roads, and I called immediately for means of bridging these gaps. Meanwhile the armoured cars began to multiply, but just as they became numerous and efficient, the trench lines on both sides reached the sea, and there was no longer open ground for manœuvre or any flanks to turn. As we could not go round the trenches, it was evidently necessary to go over them. Thus the Air was the first cause that took us to Dunkirk. The armoured car was the child of the air; and the Tank its grandchild. This was the point which the chain of causation had reached in the second week of October, 1914.

Admiral Bacon's 15-inch Howitzers.

Since Admiral Bacon had retired from the Navy, he had become general manager of the Coventry Ordnance Works. In 1913 I had kept this firm, which comprised one-third of our heavy-gun-producing power, alive by assigning it some of the 15-inch guns and turrets for the fast battleships. A few days after the war had begun I received a letter from Admiral Bacon stating that he had designed a 15-inch howitzer that could be transported by road. Interested in this astonishing assertion, I sent for him. He then spoke with energy and conviction about the general artillery aspects of the war, predicting in particular that existing fortresses would not be able to withstand the shells of great modern cannon or howitzers which were far more formidable than any contemplated at the date of their construction. I listened with interest, and when during the next fortnight the forts, first of Liège and then of Namur, were swiftly destroyed by the German siege guns, I sent for Admiral Bacon again. I told him his prediction had come true, and I asked whether he could make some big howitzers for the British Army, and how long it would take. He replied he could make a 15-inch howitzer in five months and thereafter deliver one every fortnight. I thereupon proposed to the War Office to order ten.

General von Donop, the Master General, was staggered at the idea of "this novel piece of ordnance," and expressed doubts whether it could be made or would be useful when made. But Lord Kitchener was much attracted by the idea, and the order went forward

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

15-INCH HOWITZER NEAR YPRES.

One of the great guns employed against the German lines in Flanders. Guns of this type owed their origin, as described in the text, to Admiral Bacon. They were transported on caterpillar tractors. The howitzers proved themselves to be one of the most effective types of weapon for offensive action against fortified trench lines. Their high angle fire, which enables the gunners to drop heavy shells with accuracy and destructive effect directly on top of concrete shelters and emplacements, was a potent factor in dislodging the enemy from positions of strength.

forthwith. I promised Admiral Bacon that if he completed his howitzers in the incredibly short time fixed, he should himself command them in France. The utmost expedition was therefore assured, and in fact the first of these monsters, though not ordered till after the fall of Namur, fired in the battle of Neuve Chapelle.

I was kept closely informed about their design and progress, and at the outset learned that each one with its ammunition and platform would be moved in the field in sections, by eight enormous caterpillar tractors. The pictures of these vehicles were extremely suggestive, and when Admiral Bacon showed them to me in October, I at once asked whether they would be able to cross trenches and carry guns and fighting men, or whether he could make any that would.

The First Attempt to Make a Tank.

As the result of the discussion that followed, Admiral Bacon produced a design for a caterpillar tractor which would cross a trench by means of a portable bridge which it laid down before itself and hauled up after passing over; and early in November, 1914, I directed him to make an experimental machine, and to lay the project before both Sir John French and Lord Kitchener meanwhile. On February 13, 1915, the model showing promise, I ordered thirty to be constructed.

Photo: Lafayette.

MAJOR-GENERAL SIR ERNEST SWINTON.

One of the ablest officers to serve in the British Army during the period in which occurred the Boer War and the Great War, General Swinton took a leading part in evolving the engines of war now known as tanks. In the early stages of the war he was the official "Eye Witness," or Official Correspondent with the British Expeditionary Force in France. His writings include that particularly masterly little book, well known to every officer in pre-war days, "The Defence of Duffer's Drift."

It was not until May, 1915, that the first of these engines with the bridging device was tested by the War Office. It was then rejected because it could not descend a four-foot bank and go through three feet of water (a feat not achieved by any tank up to the end of the war) or fulfil other extremely severe and indeed vexatious conditions. My order for the thirty had, however, been cancelled before their trial took place, as by that time we achieved a better design through an altogether different agency. Thus ended the first and earliest effort to make a trench-crossing vehicle or so-called "Tank" during the Great War.

The sequence of events in the second attempt to make a tank and secure its adoption by the military authorities was as follows :—

Reproduced by kind permission of the publishers from "Eye Witness" by Major-General Sir E. D. Swinton.

THE ORIGINAL TANK "MOTHER."

This photograph, taken in Hatfield Park, the secret trial ground for the early tanks, shows the first successful type to be evolved. This tank, known as "Mother," was put through her paces at Hatfield Park on February 2, 1916, before a group of distinguished spectators, which included Earl Kitchener. It has been recorded by General Swinton how, on that occasion, the Minister for War was not impressed by the new invention and held the view that tanks would quickly be put out of action by the enemy's artillery.

The Second Attempt.

Quite independently of what has been narrated above, about the middle or end of October, Colonel E. D. Swinton, who was attached to General Headquarters, France, as Eye-Witness or Official Correspondent, also realized and visualized the need of such a weapon. He accordingly broached the project to Colonel Hankey.[1] At the end of December, Colonel Hankey wrote a paper on the need of this and other mechanical devices, which he circulated to the various Members of the Cabinet directly concerned in the conduct of the war.

Reading this paper brought me back to the subject on which Admiral Bacon had already been given instructions, and on January 5 I wrote a letter to the Prime Minister from which I quote the significant paragraphs :—

It would be quite easy in a short time to fit up a number of steam tractors with small armoured shelters, in which men and machine guns could be placed, which would be bullet-proof. Used at night they would not be affected by artillery fire to any extent. The caterpillar system would enable trenches to be crossed quite easily, and the weight of the machine would destroy all wire entanglements. Forty or fifty of these engines prepared secretly and brought into position at nightfall could advance quite certainly into the enemy's trenches, smashing away all the obstructions and sweeping the trenches with their machine-gun fire and with grenades thrown out of the top. They would then make so many *points d'appui* for the British supporting infantry to rush forward and rally on them. They can then move forward to attack the second line of trenches. The cost would be small. If the experiment did not answer, what harm would be done? An obvious measure of prudence would have been to have started something like this two months ago. It should certainly be done now.

The shield is another obvious experiment which should have been made on a considerable scale. What does it matter which is the best pattern? A large number should have been made of

[1] Afterwards Sir Maurice Hankey, Secretary of the Committee of Imperial Defence and at this time of the War Council.

various patterns; some to carry, some to wear, some to wheel. If the mud now prevents the workings of shields or traction engines, the first frost would render them fully effective. With a view to this I ordered a month ago twenty shields on wheels to be made on the best design the Naval Air Service could devise. These will be ready shortly, and can, if necessary, be used for experimental purposes.

A third device which should be used systematically and on a large scale is smoke artificially produced. It is possible to make small smoke barrels which on being lighted generate a great column of dense black smoke which could be turned off or on at will. There are other matters closely connected with this to which I have already drawn your attention, but which are of so secret a character that I do not put them down on paper.

One of the most serious dangers that we are exposed to is the possibility that the Germans are acting and [are] preparing all these surprises, and that we may at any time find ourselves exposed to some entirely new form of attack. A committee of engineer officers and other experts ought to be sitting continually at the War Office to formulate schemes and examine suggestions, and I would repeat that it is not possible in most cases to have lengthy experiments beforehand. If the devices are to be ready by the time they are required it is indispensable that manufacture should proceed simultaneously with experiment. The worst that can happen is that a comparatively small sum of money is wasted.

Fate of the Second Attempt to Make a Tank.

Mr. Asquith, two or three days after receiving my letter of January 5, laid it personally before Lord Kitchener, and urged him strongly to prosecute research into all these matters. Lord Kitchener, who was entirely favourable, thereupon remitted the project to the Department of the Master General of the Ordnance. This process was mortal to the second attempt to make a Tank, and the project was decently interred in the archives of the War Office.

I did not know what had happened as a result of my letter to the Prime Minister, or what the War Office were doing; but I formed the impression that no real progress was being made, and that the military authorities were quite unconvinced either of the practicability of making such engines or of their value when made. I, however, continued to think about the subject from time to time whenever the very great pressure of Admiralty and public business afforded an opportunity. Accordingly, on January 19, 1915, I sent a minute to the Director of the Air Division instructing him to make certain experiments with steam rollers with a view to smashing in the trenches of the enemy by the mere weight of the engine. I had, of course, no expert knowledge of mechanics, and could only give or foster ideas of a suggestive character and provide funds and give orders for experiments and action. This particular variant (which was mentioned in Colonel Hankey's paper of December 28) broke down through its mechanical defects, but there is no doubt that it played its part in forming opinions among the armoured-car officers and experts connected with the armoured-car squadrons and in setting imagination to work for other and more helpful solutions.

The Duke of Westminster's Dinner.

So here are three quite separate efforts to procure the manufacture and adoption of the kind of vehicles afterwards called "Tanks," all of which had been brought to failure either by mechanical defects or by official obstruction. This deadlock might well have continued for an indefinite period of time. No demand for such weapons had come, or for many months came, from the military authorities in France; every suggestion from civilian or other quarters had been turned down by the War Office. The Dardanelles operations were beginning, and almost every hour of my day was occupied with grave Admiralty business. However, the Duke of Westminster, who commanded a squadron of armoured cars and who was himself a focus of discussion on these subjects, invited me to dine on February 17 to meet several officers from the armoured-car squadrons. The conversation turned on cross-

country armoured vehicles, and Major Hetherington, who also belonged to the armoured-car squadrons and knew of the various experiments which had been made, spoke with force and vision on the whole subject, advocating the creation of land battleships on a scale far larger than has ever been found practicable.

As a result of this conversation, I went home determined that I would give imperative orders without delay to secure the carrying forward in one form or another of the project in which I had so long believed. Accordingly I directed Major Hetherington to submit his plans, which were at that time for a platform mounted on enormous wheels 40 feet in diameter, and I forwarded these plans two days later to the First Sea Lord (Lord Fisher), urging him to devote his great energies and mechanical aptitudes to getting them carried through."

The Landships Committee.

In addition to this, the next day, the 20th, I sent for Mr. Tennyson-d'Eyncourt,[1] the Chief Constructor of the Navy, and convened a conference which, as I was ill at the time, was held in my bedroom at the Admiralty on the afternoon of that day. As the result of it the Landships Committee of the Admiralty was formed by my orders, under the Presidency of Mr. Tennyson - d'Eyncourt, reporting direct to me, and they were urged . . . in the most strenuous manner to labour to the very utmost . . . to secure a solution of the problem.

From the formation of this committee on February 20, 1915, till the appearance of tanks in action in August, 1916, during the Battle of the Somme, there is an unbroken chain of causation.

On March 20, Mr. Tennyson-d'Eyncourt reported to me that his committee had evolved two possible types, much smaller than Major Hetherington had imagined, one moved by large wheels and the other by caterpillar action. I immediately called by minute for estimates of time and money.

The Tanks Ordered.

These were supplied, and on March 26 I took the responsibility for ordering eighteen of these vehicles, which at that time were called landships, six of which were to be of the wheel type and twelve of the caterpillar type.

I thus took personal responsibility for the expenditure of the public money involved, about £70,000. I did not invite the Board of Admiralty to share this responsibility with me. I did not inform the War Office, for I knew they would raise objections to my interference in this sphere, and I knew by this time that the Department of the Master General of the Ordnance was not very receptive of such ideas. Neither did I inform the Treasury.

It was a serious decision to spend this large sum of money on a project so speculative, about the merits of which no high expert military or naval authority had been convinced. The matter, moreover, was entirely outside the scope of my own Department or of any normal powers which I possessed. Had the tanks proved wholly abortive or never been accepted or never used in war by the military authorities, and had I been subsequently summoned before a Parliamentary Committee, I could have offered no effective defence to the charge that I had wasted public money on a matter which was not in any way my business, and in regard to which I had not received expert advice in any responsible military quarter. The extremely grave situation of the war, and my conviction of the need of breaking down the deadlock which blocked the production of these engines, are my defence; but that defence is only valid in view of their enormous subsequent success.

A general observation may here be made. There was no novelty about the idea of an armoured vehicle to travel across country and pass over trenches and other natural obstacles while carrying guns and fighting men. Mr. H. G. Wells, in an article written in 1903, had practically exhausted the possibilities of imagination in this sphere. Moreover, from very early times the history of war is filled with devices of this character for use in the attack of fortresses and fortified positions. The general principles of applying the idea were also fairly obvious. Bullet-proof armour had been

[1] Afterwards Sir Eustace Tennyson-d'Eyncourt.

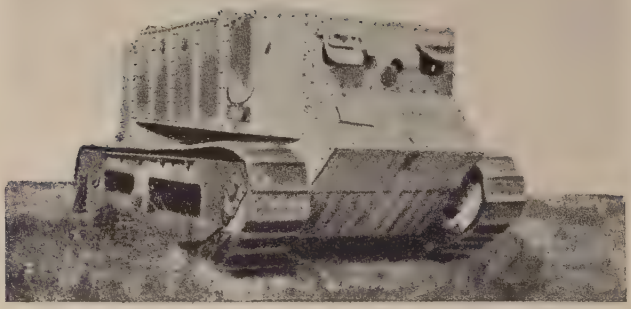


Photo: Imperial War Museum.

"LITTLE WILLIE."

The first tank, shown above, was known as "Little Willie." This machine was not a success. When put through its tests on September 19, 1915, it failed to fulfil the necessary requirements and, in due course, gave place to the improved type shown on the previous page.

carried to a high point of perfection by various hardening processes. The internal-combustion engine supplied the motive power. The Pedrail and Caterpillar systems were both well known, and had been widely applied in many parts of the world. Thus the three elements out of which tanks have been principally constituted were at hand to give effect to the idea.

Credit and Responsibility.

There are, however, two things to be kept distinct :—

(*a*) The responsibility for initiating and sustaining the action which led to the tanks being produced ; and

(*b*) The credit for solving the extremely difficult problems connected with design apart from main principles.

These services were entirely separate. There never was a moment when it was possible to say that a tank had been "invented." There never was a person about whom it could be said "this man invented the tank." But there was a moment when the actual manufacture of the first tanks was definitely ordered, and there was a moment when an effective machine was designed as the direct outcome of this authorization.

I consider that the responsibilty for the mechanical execution of the project was borne by Mr. Tennyson-d'Eyncourt. Without his high authority and immense expert knowledge the project could not have been carried to success. Under his guidance, invaluable services in the sphere of adaptation and manufacture were rendered by Sir William Tritton and Major Wilson. But I sanctioned the expenditure of public money in reliance upon Mr. Tennyson-d'Eyncourt's gifts and knowledge, and his assurances that the mechanical difficulties could be solved. I trusted him, as I would have trusted Admiral Bacon in the earlier project, to say whether the thing could

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

THE MARK I TANK.

The first type to go into action. When these engines were first evolved it became necessary, for obvious reasons, to give them a name which would provide no clue as to their nature. To describe them as landships or land cruisers would have been fatal. The appearance of "Little Willie" suggested the simple word "tank."

be done or not and to find a way round and through the technical difficulties. And once he said it could be done, I was prepared to incur both risk and responsibility in providing the necessary funds and in issuing the necessary authority. It was with him alone that I dealt, and it was from me alone that he received his orders.

Others, such as Colonel Swinton and Captain T. G. Tulloch, had seized the idea and had even laid specific proposals before the War Office in January, 1915. These officers had not, however, the executive authority which alone could ensure progress, and their efforts were brought to nothing by the obstruction of some of their superiors. They were unfortunate in not being able to command the resources necessary for action, or to convince those who had the power to act.

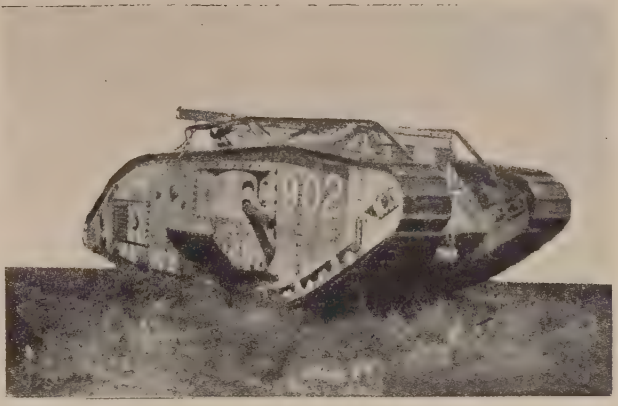


Photo: Imperial War Museum.

MARK V TANK.

One of the later types, as employed in 1918. This tank was sufficiently large to carry infantry and was designed for that purpose. Unfortunately there was one defect. The ventilation was not sufficient, and in consequence the infantry so transported were half asphyxiated before they reached their destination.

Tanks in Jeopardy, June, 1914.

After I left the Admiralty at the end of May, 1915, another moment of extreme peril threatened the enterprise. The new Board of Admiralty included three out of the four naval members of the old Board. Reinforced by Sir Henry Jackson, the new First Sea Lord, they appear to have viewed the financial commitments which had already been incurred to an extent of about £45,000 as either undesirable or wholly beyond the sphere of Admiralty interests. They therefore, in the general disfavour in which my affairs were at this time involved, proposed to terminate the contracts and scrap the whole project. However, Mr. Tennyson-d'Eyncourt remained faithful to the charge I had laid upon him. He warned me of the decisions which were impending, or which had perhaps been taken, and I thereupon as a Member

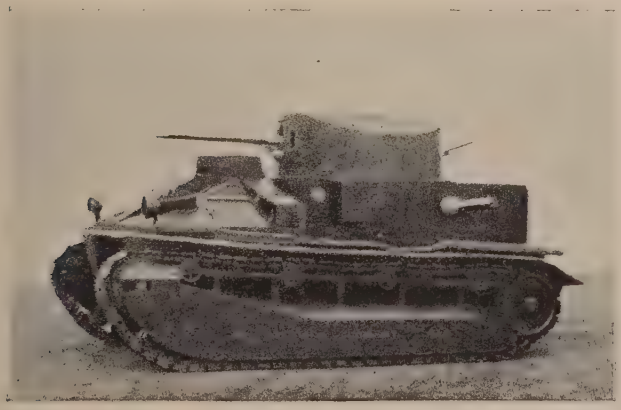


Photo: Imperial War Museum.

A MODERN TYPE.

The army of to-day is equipped with tanks which for speed and armament far exceed the early types. The engine shown above is known as a Mark II Medium and, as can be seen, carries an imposing array of guns.

of the War Committee of the Cabinet appealed personally to Mr. Balfour, the new First Lord.

After consideration, Mr. Balfour decided that the construction of one experimental machine should be proceeded with. One alone survived. But this proved to be the "Mother Tank" which, displayed in Hatfield Park in January, 1916, became the exact model of the tanks which fought on the Somme in August, 1916, and was the parent and in principle the prototype of all the heavy tanks that fought in the Great War.

* * * *

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

SINISTER AND AWE-INSPIRING.

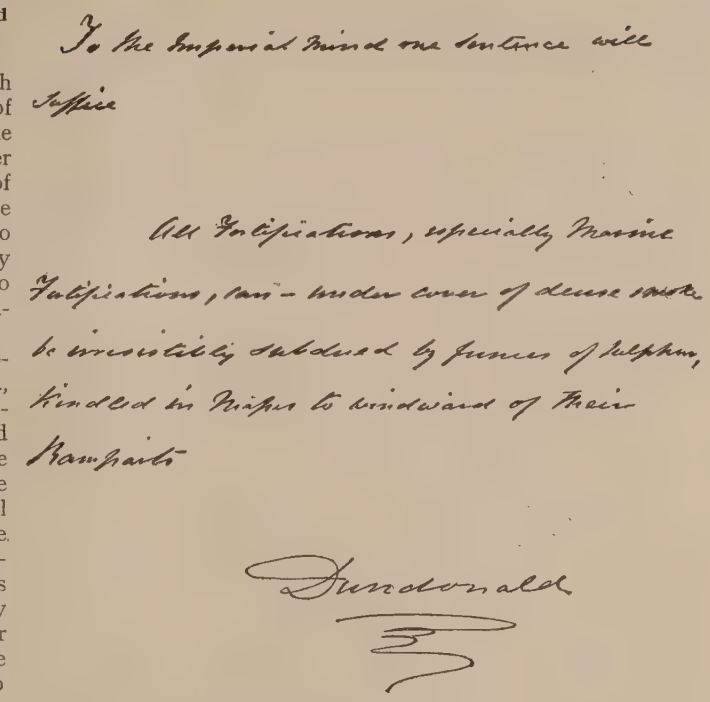
If events had so fallen out that sufficient time had been allowed to enable a large number of tanks to be assembled, and unleashed upon the enemy before their existence was suspected, it can hardly be doubted that a break-through on a wide front could have been achieved. The moral effect upon the enemy of this new weapon was great, and a glance at the illustration shown here should convince most people of the sense of impotence likely to be felt by defending infantry when this slowly advancing mass of steel rolled over their parapet, spitting flames and death to right and left.

Lord Dundonald and his Grandfather's Secret.

The paragraph in my letter of January 5 to the Prime Minister upon the use of smoke and the reference to secrets which lay behind it, also requires a digression.

Early in September, 1914, Lieutenant-General Lord Dundonald, the grandson of the famous Admiral Cochrane, spoke to Lord Kitchener of various plans left by his ancestor for making smoke screens, and also for driving an enemy from his position by means of noxious though not necessarily deadly fumes. "Lord Kitchener," writes Lord Dundonald, "at once told me that he did not consider that the plans were of any use for land operations, and as they were invented by an Admiral, I had better see the Admiralty about them."[1] Lord Dundonald therefore obtained an introduction to the Second Sea Lord, Sir Frederick Hamilton, with whom he had an interview on September 28.

The Second Sea Lord was generally favourable, and wrote (September 29), "I have talked the matter over with Prince Louis and he thinks you had better see Churchill and not mention us." I had served in Lord Dundonald's Brigade in South Africa during the Relief of Ladysmith, and I at once made an appointment to receive him. I was immediately interested in his ideas, and asked to see the plans of the illustrious Cochrane.



"TO THE IMPERIAL MIND."

Facsimile of the writing, in the hand of Admiral Cochrane, Lord Dundonald, which appeared upon the inner covering of the packet of papers referred to on this page.

He Reveals It.

Lord Dundonald replied after a few days' consideration that he felt that the national emergency at last justified him in revealing the secret which he had guarded all his life, and in the middle of October he brought me the historic papers which once before, in the Crimean War, had been placed at the disposal of the British Government. On the inner covering of the packet in the delicate writing of the old Admiral, were the words, "To the Imperial mind one sentence will suffice: All fortifications, especially marine fortifications, can under cover of dense smoke be irresistibly subdued by fumes of sulphur kindled in masses to windward of their ramparts." The reader, captivated by the compliment, will no doubt rise to

[1] Memorandum of the Earl of Dundonald. Unpublished.)

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

TAKEN IN ITS STRIDE.

Trenches present little of difficulty to the modern tank. The caterpillar track upon which it travels enables it, slowly but surely, to climb into and over any obstacle likely to be encountered on a field of battle. It can enter a trench as shown above and bring enfilade fire to bear upon the defenders or, alternatively, it can cruise along on a line parallel with the trench, crushing the parapet and mowing down the occupants. This photograph was taken during the battle of Cambrai, on November 20, 1917, and shows a Mark IV tank in the German second line.

the occasion and grasp at once the full significance of the idea. I sent for the First Sea Lord (Prince Louis of Battenberg) without delay and we had a prolonged discussion.

I now cast about for means of exploring the subject without endangering its secrecy. In the first instance I had recourse to Sir Arthur Wilson, whose practical and inventive turn of mind seemed specially adapted to the task. The results were, however, negative. During the weeks that followed Lord Dundonald continued to send me admirable suggestions, based on his grandfather's ideas, and, after giving decisive instructions to make experiments, I continued to endeavour to secure in secrecy powerful professional endorsement. He wrote me in October :—

The successful use of the plan above all depends on a favourable wind. . . . The wind statistics from the coast of Holland to Berlin show that the wind from [westerly directions] is far more prevalent than from the opposite or eastern section of the compass, especially is this so during November, December, January, and February. . . . . The vehicles with sulphur would be conducted and operated by men in Gas-proof helmets. . . .

An attack against miles of entrenchment would be made on sectional fronts by sulphur and smoke, the intervening blocks where sulphur would not be employed being smoked only, in order to blind the hostile artillery.

There can be no question but that Lord Dundonald had grasped at this time the whole idea of gas and smoke warfare, and that he had derived it directly from the papers of his grandfather. To these conceptions modern chemistry offered terrible possibilities. The use of noxious or poisonous fumes was explicity prohibited by International Law. We could not therefore employ it ourselves unless and until the enemy himself began. But when from time to time, amid the rush of the war, I turned my mind to this subject, and thought of German chemical science and German mentality, I became increasingly disquieted. As it was very difficult to obtain any high military or naval assistance, and I had not the life and strength to carry this additional load of thought myself, I turned to another

quarter. In January I advised Lord Dundonald to lay his grandfather's scheme before Colonel Hankey, and on March 21 I ordered a strong technical Committee on the subject to be formed under the presidency of Lord Dundonald. I made it clear, however, that we could not depart from the accepted Laws of War.

Smoke.

I kept in close touch with the work of the Committee. Progress, even in the limited sphere to which we were confined by International Law and State Policy, was slow and fitful; but on April 10 I was able to write to Sir John French :—

Mr. Churchill to Sir John French.

April 10, 1915.

I have seen some wonderful smoke-making experiments carried out by my directions. A light portable metal cone of the simplest construction, 3 feet high and 6 feet wide at the base, is fed by gravity at the base with benzol. The oil spreads over the surface of the cone, causing a dense smoke which you can turn off instantaneously by a tap on the fuel supply.

I am developing this system for naval purposes, but my reflections lead me increasingly to believe in its importance in the kind of warfare you are now waging. If the wind were favourable, you could blanket off absolutely in a few minutes a whole sector of the enemy's artillery and rifle fire. You could use it to cut out a particular village or line of trenches till your men were actually upon them with the bayonet. Or again you could cover the bringing up to the decisive point of a large mass of cavalry at the critical moment.

On April 22, 1915, the Germans, violating the Law of War, made their first poison-gas attack, and the second battle of Ypres began. This crime and folly was destined to expose them to severe retaliation from those who had the advantage of the prevailing winds, and in the end of the superior science; but who had hitherto been restrained by

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

THE USE OF A SMOKE SCREEN.

The above photograph, taken during the war in France, shows infantry advancing under cover of a tank which is engaging the enemy with fire from its guns and at the same time providing a smoke screen. The use of smoke has proved a valuable expedient. By screening the advance of attacking troops on land, or at sea the movements of ships, the enemy's fire is robbed of much of its accuracy and effect.

respect for international usage from turning their favourable position to account.

* * * *

The Conception of the Battle of Cambrai.

There is one further stage in the tale of the Tanks to be described, and for this I must considerably anticipate chronology. When I resigned from the Cabinet in November, 1915, in circumstances which will be presently related, and joined the Army in France, I conceived myself to be the bearer to them of a good gift. This gift was the conception of a battle and of a victory; and I knew that the Commander-in-Chief, Sir John French, would study the proposals I submitted with deep and friendly attention. Accordingly on arrival at General Headquarters I drew up a paper dated December 3, called "Variants of the Offensive," which was printed for the Committee of Imperial Defence. I laid this before Sir John French, and later before his successor, Sir Douglas Haig. The first of these Variants may be quoted here.

Caterpillars.

The cutting of the enemy's wire and the general domination of his firing-line can be effected by engines of this character. About seventy are now nearing completion in England, and should be inspected. None should be used until all can be used at once. They should be disposed secretly along the whole attacking front two or three hundred yards apart. Ten or fifteen minutes before the assault these engines should move forward over the best line of advance open, passing through or across our trenches at prepared points. They are capable of traversing any ordinary obstacle, ditch, breastwork, or trench. They carry two or three Maxims each, and can be fitted with flame apparatus. Nothing but a direct hit from a field gun will stop them. On reaching the enemy's wire they turn to the left or right and run down parallel to the enemy's trench, sweeping his parapet with their fire, and crushing and cutting the barbed wire in lanes and in a slightly serpentine course. While doing this the Caterpillars will be so close to the enemy's line that they will be immune from his artillery. Through the gaps thus made the shield-bearing infantry will advance.

If artillery is used to cut wire, the direction and imminence of the attack is proclaimed days beforehand. But by this method the assault follows the wire-cutting almost immediately, i.e. before any reinforcements can be brought up by the enemy, or any special defensive measures taken.[1]

Surprise.

4. The Caterpillars are capable of actually crossing the enemy's trench and advancing to cut his communication trenches; but into this aspect it is not necessary to go now. One step at a time. It will be easy, when the enemy's front line is in our hands, to find the best places for the Caterpillars to cross by for any further advance which may be required. They can climb any slope. They are, in short, movable machine-gun cupolas as well as wire-smashers. The naval torpedo-net-cutter, fixed in front of them with guides to lead the gathered wires into it, has proved absolutely successful. The spectacle of such a machine cutting wire entanglements has only to be witnessed to carry conviction. It resembles the reaping operations of a self-binder. Three or four days' notice to the Trench Warfare Department should enable this demonstration to be made.

5. It is obvious that the above form of attack requires, at the present season, frost, darkness, and surprise. The parry to the Caterpillar is either protective mining galleries, fougasses, buried shells, etc., or field guns concealed in the parapet. But if this trick works once, a new one can be devised for next time. Until these machines are actually in France, it is not possible to measure the full limit of their powers. But it is believed that during the dark hours of a winter's night not one but several successive lines of trenches could be taken by their agency. As they moved forward into the enemy's positions, his artillery would be increasingly hampered in firing at them, and, with deepening confusion, the location of and laying the guns upon these moving structures will

[1] The italics are new.

become almost impossible. Daylight would leave them an easy prey;[1] but if daylight witnessed an entirely new situation they would have done their part, even if they could not be withdrawn. They would, as they advanced, carry the infantry attack along with them and serve as movable *points d'appui*, guiding and defining the attack.

Premature Exposure of the Tanks.

The scheme of attack by caterpillar vehicles thus unfolded was not put into operation until the first Battle of Cambrai in November, 1917. In the light of years of experience many errors can be detected in this forecast; but it might well have served as a basis for intense military study. Three months later, in February, 1916, Colonel Swinton, who was then serving on the Secretariat of the Committee of Imperial Defence, and had witnessed the early trials of "Mother Tank," set forth and printed in careful and accurate detail the plan of a Tank battle on a great scale. In spite of this it took the High Command nearly two whole years more to learn to use tanks in the manner and conditions for which they were originally conceived.

During the interval every conceivable mistake was committed, which lack of comprehension could suggest. The first twenty tanks, in spite of my protests and the far more potent objections of Mr. Asquith and Mr. Lloyd George, were improvidently exposed to the enemy at the Battle of the Somme. The immense advantage of novelty and surprise was thus squandered while the number of the tanks was small, while their condition was experimental and their crews almost untrained. This priceless conception, containing if used in its integrity and on a sufficient scale, the certainty of a great and brilliant victory, was revealed to the Germans for the mere petty purpose of taking a few ruined villages. Mercifully the high military authorities of all countries belonged to the same school of thought. The revelation passed unappreciated by the German Command. Though full of novelty and terror, the tank could no longer be an apparition, but at least we were not ourselves confronted with German tanks in large numbers in 1917.

[1] I underrated their immunity.

Their Mishandling by G.H.Q.

That year was to witness the further misuse of the British tank. Instead of employing them all at once in dry weather on ground not torn by bombardment, in some new sector where they could operate very easily and by surprise, they were plunged in fours and fives as a mere minor adjunct of the infantry into the quagmires and crater-fields of Paschendaele. The enemy was familiarized with them by their piecemeal use; and they themselves were brought wallowing to a standstill in the mud.

In spite of the reasoning of two years before and the steady appeals and arguments of the officers of the Tank Corps, it was not until Paschendaele was over that the tanks were given their chance. They were at last to have their own battle. They were at last to be allowed to show that they could destroy wire without a bombardment which would warn the enemy, and consequently restore the element of surprise to a modern offensive.

The Tanks Established.

To General Byng fell the honour of organizing the Battle of Cambrai which began on November 20, 1917. Tardily and doubtingly as they were used, the results were decisive. In a few hours a victory was gained almost without loss. However, as no adequate preparations had been made to exploit it, the after consequences were disappointing, and even a few days later disastrous. It was not until 1918 that the combination of smoke with tanks, and the use of smoke to cover the advance of numbers of tanks, were actually adopted in the field. Had the war continued into 1919, every tank would have possessed the means of making its own smoke, and all tank operations would have been conducted under clouds of artificial fog. But after the Battle of Cambrai the fame of the tanks was secure, and henceforward throughout 1918 they became to the eyes of friend and foe alike the great decisive weapon and distinctive feature of the British, French and American offensives.

CHAPTER XXXVI

THE CHOICE

Loss of the *Formidable*—The Russian Appeal—Lord Kitchener's Letters of January 2—Lord Fisher Enters the Field—A Consensus of Opinion—Telegrams to Vice-Admiral Carden—Views of the Staff—Vice-Admiral Carden's Plan, January 11—Its Favourable Reception—The *Queen Elizabeth*—Negotiation with the French Government—Responsibilities.

THE New Year opened for the Admiralty under queer and stormy skies. Vice-Admiral Bayly had been brought from the Grand Fleet to command the 5th Battle Squadron at the Nore, and this squadron was to become the nucleus of a specially trained bombarding fleet, through which it was hoped to develop the means of a naval offensive.

The Admiral came down from the north by no means enamoured of a change which gave him a squadron of "Formidables" in place of the "Dreadnoughts" which he had commanded. Like most sailors, his heart was with the Grand Fleet; but he addressed himself to his new work with his customary zeal. He sought permission from the Admiralty to take his squadron into the Channel for a cruise. He passed the Straits in daylight under flotilla escort arranged from the Admiralty and spent December 31 exercising off Portland. The flotilla, after seeing him through the Straits, left him at dusk to return to Dover, and no evil consequences had occurred during the daylight.

Loss of the *Formidable*.

The ships turned westward down channel after dark and by 2 a.m. were approaching the Start. The wind and sea were rising, but the moon shone brightly. The speed was 10 knots and the course direct, not zigzag. A German submarine, cruising on the surface of the Channel, unobserved in the moonlight amid the dancing waves, fired a torpedo with fatal effect against the *Formidable*, the last ship of the line. In two hours and a half the vessel sank with the loss of Captain Loxley and over 500 officers and men, the highest forms of discipline and devotion being observed by all ranks.

This melancholy news reached the Admiralty with the light of New Year's Day. Lord Fisher was indignant at the manner in which the squadron had been handled. The explanations which were demanded of the Admiral were not considered satisfactory by his naval chiefs. To my extreme regret, both on personal and on far wider grounds, it was decided to remove him from his command. I therefore appointed him to the control of Greenwich College, where he remained for some time.[1]

The Russian Appeal.

Various attempts were now made to survey the general situation and make plans for the spring. On January 1 the Chancellor of the Exchequer, Mr. Lloyd George, circulated a paper of the highest importance, drawing attention to the unfounded optimism which prevailed about the war situation, to the increasing failure of Russia as a prime factor, and to the need for action in the Balkan Peninsula to rally Greece and Bulgaria to the cause of the Allies. There was also a pregnant and prescient Memorandum by Colonel Hankey, which is referred to in the Report of the Dardanelles Commission. Both these papers pointed to the Near East as the true field for our action and initiative in 1915. After reading advance copies of these documents I forwarded the latter on December 31 to the Prime Minister, saying:—

"We are substantially in agreement,

[1] Vice-Admiral Sir Lewis Bayly in the later years of the war, as is well known, fully vindicated the high qualities with which he had been credited.

and our conclusions are not incompatible.

"I wanted Gallipoli attacked on the declaration of war. . . . Meanwhile the difficulties have increased. . . . I think the War Council ought to meet daily for a few days next week. No topic can be pursued to any fruitful result at weekly intervals."

Lord Kitchener's Letters of January 2.

On January 2 I received the following letter from Lord Kitchener :—

You have no doubt seen Buchanan's telegram about the Russians and Turks ; if not Fitzgerald is taking it over.

Do you think any naval action would be possible to prevent [the] Turks sending more men into the Caucasus and thus denuding Constantinople ?

With this note, Colonel Fitzgerald brought the telegram from which the following extract is relevant :—

"Early this week the position of Russians in the Caucasus gave cause for grave anxiety, Turks having commenced enveloping movement seriously threatening Russian forces. Commander-in-Chief of the Army in the Caucasus pressed most urgently for reinforcements, many Caucasian troops being now employed against Germans, but Grand Duke has told him he must manage to keep on as he is.

"*Grand Duke, however, asked if it would be possible for Lord Kitchener to arrange for a demonstration of some kind against Turks elsewhere, either naval or military, and to spread reports which would cause Turks, who he says are very liable to go off at a tangent, to withdraw some of the forces now acting against Russians in the Caucasus, and thus ease the position of Russians.*[1]

"Grand Duke added that, even if Lord Kitchener was unable to help, he should stick to his present plans."

Later in the day Lord Kitchener came over himself to see me at the Admiralty, and we had a full discussion on the Russian telegram and whether the Navy could do anything to help. All the possible alternatives in the Turkish theatre were mentioned. We both had in mind our discussions of November on the possibilities of a descent from Egypt upon Gallipoli. We both saw clearly the far-reaching consequences of a successful attack upon Constantinople. If there was any prospect of a serious attempt to force the Straits of the Dardanelles at a later stage, it would be in the highest degree improvident to stir them up for the sake of a mere demonstration. I put this point forward, and suggested alternative diversions to help the Russians. Lord Kitchener did not dissent from the argument, but he returned steadily and decidedly to the statement that he had no troops to spare, and could not face a large new expansion of our military commitments. I have no record of this conversation, but my recollection of it is confirmed by the second letter which I received from Lord Kitchener on this same day (January 2).

[1] The italics are mine.

Lord Kitchener to Mr. Churchill.

January 2, 1915.

I do not see that we can do anything that will very seriously help the Russians in the Caucasus.

The Turks are evidently withdrawing most of their troops from Adrianople and using them to reinforce their army against Russia, probably sending them by the Black Sea.

In the Caucasus and Northern Persia the Russians are in a bad way.

We have no troops to land anywhere. A demonstration at Smyrna would do no good and probably cause the slaughter of Christians. Alexandretta has already been tried, and would have no great effect a second time. The coast of Syria would have no effect. The only place that a demonstration might have some effect in stopping reinforcements going East would be the Dardanelles. Particularly if, as the Grand Duke says, reports could be spread at the same time that Constantinople was threatened.

We shall not be ready for anything big for some months.

On the same day Lord Kitchener, as the result no doubt of the conversation which he had had with me, sent through the Foreign Office the following telegram to Petrograd :—

"Please assure the Grand Duke that

steps will be taken to make a demonstration against the Turks. It is, however, feared that any action we can devise and carry out will be unlikely to seriously affect numbers of enemy in the Caucasus, or cause their withdrawal."

This telegram committed us to a demonstration against the Turks of some kind or another, but it did not commit us in respect of its direction, character or scope. It was the least that could have been said in answer to a request of a hard-pressed ally.

Lord Fisher enters the Field.

The next morning (January 3) Lord Fisher entered the field. He had been considering all these matters, had read the various Cabinet papers and the Russian telegram, and had full knowledge of my conversation with Lord Kitchener. The letter which he now sent me is of great importance. It reveals Lord Fisher's position fully and clearly. The turbulence of its style in no way affects the shrewdness and profundity of its vision. I do not think that Lord Fisher ever took any action or expressed any opinions which were irreconcilable with the general principles of these first thoughts. He was always in favour of a great scheme against the Turks and to rally the Balkans. He always believed that Bulgaria was the key to the situation in this quarter. He was always prepared to risk the old battleships as part of a large naval, military and diplomatic combination. In all this we were, as his letter shows, in entire agreement. That these large schemes were not carried into effect was not his fault nor mine.

January 3, 1915.

DEAR WINSTON,—

I've been informed by Hankey that War Council assembles next Thursday,

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

KILID BAHR FROM THE STRAITS.

A general view of Kilid Bahr, one of the fortified points on the Gallipoli Peninsula. The ace of clubs fort, of which an aerial view was given on page 467, is seen on the left of the photograph. The Kilid Bahr plateau rises to a height of 700 feet and the fort commands the Strait, which at this point is only three-quarters of a mile wide.

Photo: E.N.A.

SEDD-EL-BAHR.

The old fort at Sedd-el-Bahr marks the spot near which the gallant men of the Dublin and Munster Fusiliers and the Hampshire Regiment landed from the *River Clyde* on April 25, 1915. Known for the purposes of the landing as "V" Beach this strip of sand was the scene of some of the most heroic episodes of the Gallipoli campaign. The landing was an epic. That it was ever accomplished at all was little short of a miracle.

and I suppose it will be like a game of ninepins! Everyone will have a plan, and one ninepin in falling will knock over its neighbour! I CONSIDER THE ATTACK ON TURKEY HOLDS THE FIELD! —but ONLY if it's IMMEDIATE! However, it won't be! Our Aulic Council will adjourn till the following Thursday fortnight! (N.B. *When did we meet last and what came of it? ? ?*)

We shall decide on a futile bombardment of the Dardanelles which wears out the irreplaceable guns of the *Indefatigable* which probably will require replacement. What good resulted from the last bombardment? Did it move a single Turk from the Caucasus? And so the war goes on! You want ONE man!

This is the Turkey plan:—

I. Appoint Sir W. Robertson the present Quartermaster-General to command the Expeditionary Force.

II. Immediately replace all Indians and 75,000 seasoned troops from Sir John French's command with Territorials, etc., from England (as you yourself suggested) and embark this Turkish Expeditionary Force ostensibly for protection of Egypt! WITH ALL POSSIBLE DESPATCH at *Marseilles*! and land them at Besika Bay direct with previous feints before they arrive with troops now in Egypt against Haifa and Alexandretta, the latter to be a REAL occupation because of its inestimable value as regards the oil fields of the Garden of Eden, with which by rail it is in direct communication, and we shove out the Germans now established at Alexandretta with an immense Turkish concession—the last act of that arch-enemy of England, Marschall von Bieberstein!

III. The Greeks to go for Gallipoli at the same time as we go for Besika, and the Bulgarians for Constantinople, and the Russians, the Servians, and Roumanians for Austria (*all this you said yourself!*).

IV. Sturdee forces the Dardanelles at the same time with "Majestic" class and "Canopus" class! God bless him!

Photo: E.N.A.

ADRIANOPLE GATE AND WAR OFFICE: CONSTANTINOPLE.

Constantinople boasts of many fine buildings, and in 1914 the city was reputed to contain over eight hundred mosques. Rich in remains of Greek architecture, Constantinople's heritage from ancient Byzantium, the place is at once one of the pleasantest and most interesting in Europe. The photograph reproduced above shows the Adrianople Gate and, in the background, the Turkish War Office.

But as the great Napoleon said, "CELERITY"—without it—"FAILURE"!

In the history of the world—a Junta has never won! You want *one* man!

Yours,

F.

A Consensus of Opinion.

There never was the slightest chance of the whole of the Fisher plan being carried into effect. Sir William Robertson, to whom he proposed to entrust it, would presumably have advised strongly against it, his policy being concentration in the main, or, as he would no doubt have described it, the decisive theatre. The withdrawal of the Indian Corps and 75,000 seasoned troops from Sir John French's command and their replacement by Territorial Divisions would have been resisted to the point of resignation by the Commander-in-Chief, supported by his whole staff. General Joffre and the French Government would have protested in a decisive manner. Lord Fisher's third paragraph about the Greeks, Bulgarians, Serbians and Roumanians expressed exactly what everybody wanted. It was the obvious supreme objective in this part of the world. The question was, How to procure it? This was the root of the matter. It was in connection with this that Lord Fisher's fourth paragraph made its impression upon me. Here for the first time was the suggestion of forcing the Dardanelles with the old battleships.

This series of weighty representations had the effect of making me move. I thought I saw a great convergence of opinion in the direction of that attack upon the Dardanelles which I had always so greatly desired. The arguments in its favour were overwhelming. And now the highest authorities, political, naval and military, were apparently ready to put their shoulders to the wheel. All

Mr. Lloyd George's advocacy and influence seemed about to be cast in the direction of Turkey and the Balkans. Though his method was different, the ultimate object, namely, the rallying of the Balkan States against Austria and Turkey, was the same, and all his arguments applied equally to either method.

I knew from my talks with Mr. Balfour that he too was profoundly impressed by the advantages which might be reaped by successful action in this south-eastern theatre. Lastly, the Foreign Office and Sir Edward Grey were, of course, keenly interested. Here was a great consensus of opinion. Here it seemed at last was a sufficient impulse and unity for action.

Telegrams to Vice-Admiral Carden.

But was there a practicable scheme? This I determined to find out, and on January 3, with the active agreement of Lord Fisher and after a talk with Sir Henry Jackson who was specially studying this theatre and advising us thereupon, I telegraphed to Vice-Admiral Carden, commanding at the Dardanelles, as follows :—

Admiralty to Vice-Admiral Carden.

January 3, 1915.

From First Lord :

Do you consider the forcing of the Dardanelles by ships alone a practicable operation ?

It is assumed older battleships fitted with mine-bumpers would be used, preceded by colliers or other merchant craft as mine-bumpers and sweepers.

Importance of results would justify severe loss.

Let me know your views.

All this was purely exploratory. I did not commit myself at this stage even to the general principle of an attack upon Turkey. I wanted to see the alternatives weighed and to see what support such projects would in fact command.

All our affairs at this time were complicated with plans which were under discussion for the advance of the Army along the coast and for the closing up of Zeebrugge.

I was still thinking a great deal of the northern theatre, of Borkum and of the Baltic. "We had better," I wrote on January 4 in a note to the First Sea Lord on various points that would come up for discussion at the War Council the next day, "hear what others have to say about the Turkish plans before taking a decided line. I would not grudge 100,000 men, because of the great political effects in the Balkan Peninsula." . . .

Photo : Lafayette.

ADMIRAL SIR SACKVILLE CARDEN.

At the outbreak of the Great War, Vice-Admiral Carden, as he then was, was superintendent of the Dockyard at Malta. On September 21 of that year he was appointed by the Admiralty to command the squadron off the Dardanelles. He carried out the preliminary operations against the Turks in this theatre until March, 1915, when he resigned for reasons of ill-health.

"The naval advantages," he replied the same day, "of the possession of Constantinople and the getting of wheat from the Black Sea are so overwhelming that I consider Colonel Hankey's plan for Turkish operations vital and imperative and very pressing."[1]

There is no doubt we could have worked together unitedly and with the utmost enthusiasm for the southern amphibious plan, if it had been pressed forward by the War Council on a great scale and with the necessary drive and decision.

On January 5 the answer from Admiral Carden arrived. It was remarkable.

Vice-Admiral Carden to First Lord.

January 5, 1915.

With reference to your telegram of 3rd instant, I do not consider Dardanelles can be rushed.

They might be forced by extended operations with large number of ships.

Views of the Staff.

At the War Council that afternoon the question of an attack on Turkey and a diversion in the Near East was one of the principal subjects discussed. Everyone seemed alive to all its advantages, and Admiral Carden's telegram, which I read out, was heard with extreme interest. Its significance lay in the fact that it offered a prospect of influencing the eastern situation in a decisive manner without opening a new military commitment on a large scale; and further it afforded an effective means of helping the Grand Duke without wasting the Dardanelles possibilities upon nothing more than a demonstration.

On my return to the Admiralty I found that the idea of a gradual forcing of the Straits by extended operations was reviewed with favour both by Admiral Oliver, the Chief of the Staff, and by Sir Henry Jackson. I had a conversation with Sir Henry Jackson, who had that day completed a memorandum upon the question (which I read some days later). Sir Henry Jackson deprecated any attempt to rush the Straits, but he spoke of the considerable effects of the brief bombardment of November 3, and he was attracted by the idea of a step-by-step reduction of the fortresses, though troops would be needed to follow up and complete the naval attack and especially to occupy Constantinople. So here we had the Chief of the Staff, the Admiral studying this particular theatre, and the Admiral in command, all apparently in general accord in principle. This coincidence of opinion in officers so widely separated and so differently circumstanced impressed me very much, and I therefore telegraphed on January 6 to Vice-Admiral Carden as follows:—

First Lord to Admiral Carden.

January 6, 1915.

Your view is agreed with by high authorities here. Please telegraph in detail what you think could be done by extended operations, what force would be needed, and how you consider it should be used.

There was another meeting of the War Council on January 8 and prolonged discussion of the eastern theatre. Dealing with the various alternatives, Lord Kitchener expressed an opinion in favour of an attack on the Dardanelles. He told the Council that the Dardanelles appeared to be the most suitable military objective, as an attack there could be made in co-operation with the Fleet. He estimated that 150,000 men would be sufficient for the capture of the Dardanelles, but reserved his final opinion until a close study had been made. He offered no troops and made it clear that none were available. His contribution was therefore, and was intended to be, purely theoretic.

Vice-Admiral Carden's Plan, January 11.

On January 11 arrived the detailed Carden plan.[1] It was in its details largely the work of an very able officer of Marines—Captain Godfrey (who was one of the Vice-Admiral's Staff)—and of the gunnery experts of the *Inflexible*. I set it out in all essentials.

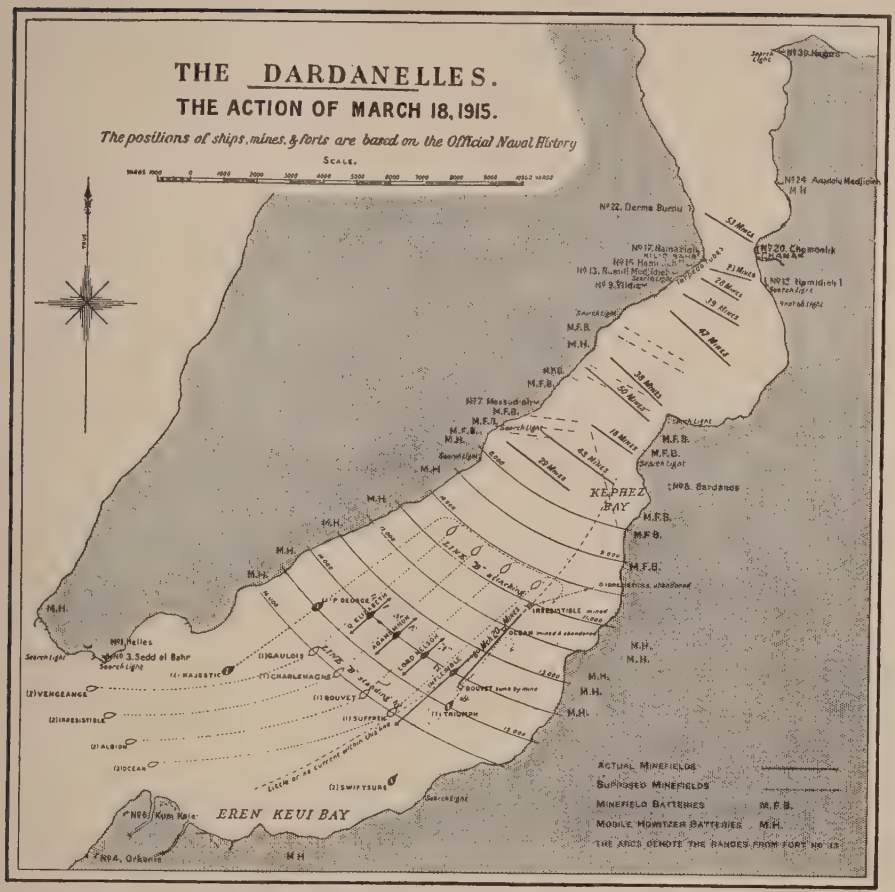
Possibility of operations:—

(A.) Total reduction of defences at the entrance.

(B.) Clear defences inside of Straits

[1] The word "plan" is hardly correct. Colonel Hankey had presented a general appreciation upon the importance of the Turkish theatre.

[1] See map of Dardanelles, facing page 535.


THE DARDANELLES.
THE ACTION OF MARCH 18, 1915.
The positions of ships, mines, & forts are based on the Official Naval History
SCALE.
KEPHEZ BAY
EREN KEUI BAY
ACTUAL MINEFIELDS
SUPPOSED MINEFIELDS
MINEFIELD BATTERIES
MOBILE HOWITZER BATTERIES
THE ARCS DENOTE THE RANGES FROM FORT No 13

THE DARDANELLES.

Accurate plan of the Straits of the Dardanelles showing the positions of ships, mines and forts at the time of the action of March 18, 1915, based upon data contained in the Official Naval History.

up to and including Kephez Point Battery No. 8.

(C.) Reduction of defences at the Narrows, Chanak.

(D.) Clear passage through minefield, advancing through Narrows, reducing forts above Narrows, and final advance to Marmora.

Force required, 12 battleships, of which 4 fitted with mine-bumpers. Three battle-cruisers—2 should be available on entering Marmora—3 light cruisers, 1 flotilla leader, 16 destroyers, 1 depôt repairing ship, 6 submarines, 4 seaplanes and the *Foudre*, 12 minesweepers, including, perhaps, 4 fleet sweepers, 1 hospital ship, 6 colliers at Tenedos Island, 2 supply and ammunition ships. The above force allows for casualties.

Details of action :—

Frequent reconnaissance by seaplanes indispensable.

(A.) Indirect bombardment of forts, reduction completed by direct bombardment at decisive range ; torpedo tubes at the entrance and guns commanding minefield destroyed ; minefield cleared.

(B.) Battleships, preceded by minesweepers, enter Straits, working way up

till position reached from which battery No. 8 can be silenced.

(C.) Severe bombardment of forts by battle-cruisers from Gaba Tepe spotted from battleships; reduction completed by direct fire at decisive range.

(D.) Battleships, preceded by sweepers, making way up towards Narrows. Forts 22, 23, 24 first bombarded from Gaba Tepe, spotting for 22 by seaplanes, then direct fire. Sweep minefields in Narrows, the fort at Nagara reduced by direct fire, battle force proceeds to Marmora preceded by mine-sweepers.

Expenditure on ammunition for (C) would be large, but if supplies sufficient, result should be successful. Difficulty as to (B) greatly increased if *Goeben* assisting defence from Nagara. It would, unless submarine attacks successful, necessitate employment of battle-cruisers from Gaba Tepe or direct.

Time required for operations depends greatly on *moral* of enemy under bombardment; garrison largely stiffened by the Germans; also on the weather conditions. Gales now frequent. Might do it all in a month about.

Expenditure of ammunition would be large. Approximate estimate of quantity required being prepared.

Disposition of squadron on completion of operations: Marmora, 2 battle-cruisers, 4 battleships, 3 light cruisers, 1 flotilla leader, 12 torpedo-boat destroyers, 3 submarines, 1 supply and ammunition ship, 4 mine-sweepers, collier.

Remainder of force keeping Straits open and covering mine-sweepers completing clearing minefield.

Its Favourable Reception.

This plan produced a great impression upon everyone who saw it. It was to me in its details an entirely novel proposition. My telegram had contemplated something in the nature of an organized "rush" in accordance with Lord Fisher's suggestion about Admiral Sturdee forcing the Straits with the "Canopus" class of battleships. I sent a copy of the plan at once to the Prime Minister and some others, and it was freely discussed among those who were informed. Both the First Sea Lord and the Chief of the Staff seemed favourable to it. No one at any time threw the slightest doubt upon its technical soundness. No one, for instance, of the four or five great naval authorities each with his technical staff who were privy said, "This is absurd. Ships cannot fight forts," or criticized its details. On the contrary, they all treated it as an extremely interesting and hopeful proposal; and there grew up in the secret circles of the Admiralty a perfectly clear opinion favourable to the operation. It was then that the War Staff made a suggestion which certainly greatly affected the issue.

The *Queen Elizabeth*.

The *Queen Elizabeth*, the first in order of the five fast battleships armed with 15-inch guns, was now ready. It had been decided to send her to fire her gunnery trials and calibration exercises in the safe, calm waters of the Mediterranean. She was actually under orders to proceed thither. The Staff now proposed that she should test her enormous guns against the Dardanelles and pointed out that she could fire at ranges far outside those of the Turkish forts. This had not occurred to me before. But the moment it was mentioned, its importance was apparent. We all felt ourselves in the presence of a new fact. Moreover, the *Queen Elizabeth* came into the argument with a cumulative effect. Vice-Admiral Carden had never dreamed of having her. Our previous discussions and his detailed plan had ignored any help that she might give.

* * * *

I now called for definite plans and orders to be worked out by the Staff, and I outlined the Fleet that was evidently available for the operation.

Secretary.
First Sea Lord.
Chief of Staff.

January 12.

(1) The forcing of the Dardanelles as proposed, and the arrival of a squadron strong enough to defeat the Turkish Fleet in the Sea of Marmora, would be a victory of first importance, and change

to our advantage the whole situation of the war in the East.

(2) It would appear possible to provide the force required by Admiral Carden without weakening the margins necessary in Home waters, as follows :—

Ocean, Swiftsure and *Triumph* (already in or assigned to this theatre).

Vengeance, Canopus (from the Atlantic).

Albion (from the Cape).

Cæsar and *Prince George* (from Gibraltar).

Victorious, Mars, Magnificent, Hannibal (already ordered to be dismantled at home).

Queen Elizabeth (detailed for gunnery preparation at Gibraltar).

Inflexible (ordered to Mediterranean to relieve *Indefatigable*).

Indefatigable (already on the spot).

Thus no capital ship would be ordered from Home waters, except four already ordered to be dismantled.

(3) The above takes no account of four French battleships on the spot, and six others reported available. . . .

(4) Operations could begin on February 1, by long-range fire from *Queen Elizabeth* on forts at the entrance. It is not necessary to develop the full attack until the effect of the first stage of the operation has become apparent. All arrangements should be secretly concerted for carrying the plan through, the seaplanes and ancillary craft being provided. Admiral Carden to command. . . .

Definite plans should be worked out accordingly.

W. S. C.

Lord Fisher approved this minute, and himself at a later date (February 9) added to the proposed fleet the two quasi-Dreadnought battleships, the *Lord Nelson* and the *Agamemnon*. This was a great reinforcement, and involved a diminution to that extent in the margin of the Grand Fleet.

On January 13 I brought the project before the War Council. I circulated Admiral Carden's telegram twenty-four hours beforehand to its principal members, including, of course, the Prime Minister and Lord Kitchener. Lord Kitchener thought the plan was worth trying. "We could leave off the bombardment," he said, "if it did not prove effective." Lord Fisher and Sir Arthur Wilson were both present. Neither made any remark and I certainly thought that they agreed. The decision of the Council was unanimous, and was recorded in the following curious form :—

"That the Admiralty should consider promptly the possibility of effective action in the Adriatic at Cattaro or elsewhere—with a view (*inter alia*) of bringing pressure on Italy.

"That the Admiralty should also prepare for a naval expedition in February to bombard and take the Gallipoli Peninsula with Constantinople as its objective."

After the Council I sent the following telegram on January 15 with Lord Fisher's concurrence to Admiral Carden :

Your scheme was laid by the First Sea Lord and myself before the Cabinet War Council yesterday, and was approved in principle.

We see no difficulty in providing the force you require, including the *Queen Elizabeth*, by February 15.

We entirely agree with your plan of methodical piecemeal reduction of forts as the Germans did at Antwerp.

We propose to entrust this operation to you.

Admiral de Robeck will probably be your second in command.

The sooner we can begin the better.

You will shortly receive the official instructions of the Board.

Continue to perfect your plan.

* * * *

Negotiation with the French Government.

I now proceeded to open the matter to the French Government, with whom among other things the question of the command in the Mediterranean required readjustment.

I outlined our plan for forcing the Dardanelles and added :—

The Admiralty do not wish, in view of this very important operation, that any change in the local command in that portion of the Mediterranean should be made at the present time. They hope, however, that the squadron of French

battleships, together with the French submarines and destroyers and the seaplane ship *Foudre,* will co-operate under a French rear-admiral.

Before handing this note to the French naval attaché I took care to have the draft formally countersigned by the Prime Minister, Lord Kitchener, and Sir Edward Grey, as well as by the First Sea Lord and the Chief of the Staff. This precaution was appropriate to a matter of grave importance, about which it was essential there should be no subsequent misunderstanding.

I made a similar communication to the Grand Duke Nicholas.

Responsibilities.

It will be seen that the genesis of this plan and its elaboration were purely naval and professional in their character. It was Admiral Carden and his staff gunnery officers who proposed the gradual method of piecemeal reduction by long-range bombardment. It was Sir Henry Jackson and the Admiralty staff who embraced this idea and studied and approved its detail. Right or wrong, it was a Service plan. Similarly the Admiralty orders were prepared exclusively by the Chief of the Staff and his assistants. I outlined the resources at our disposal in the old battleships. But it was the staff who proposed the addition of the *Queen Elizabeth,* with all the possibilities that that ship opened out. It was the First Sea Lord who added the other two most powerful vessels, the *Lord Nelson* and the *Agamemnon,* to the Dardanelles Fleet. At no point did lay or civilian interference mingle with or mar the integrity of a professional conception.

I write this not in the slightest degree to minimize or shift my own responsibility. But this was not where it lay. I did not and I could not make the plan. But when it had been made by the naval authorities, and fashioned and endorsed by high technical authorities and approved by the First Sea Lord, I seized upon it and set it on the path of action; and thereafter espoused it with all my resources. When others weakened or changed their opinion without adducing new reasons, I held them strongly to their previous decisions; and so in view of the general interest of the Allies, thrust the business steadily forward into actual experiment.

* * * *

Thus is completed the account of the first phase in the initiation of the enterprise against the Dardanelles. There can be very little dispute about the facts in the face of the documents. For twenty days the project has been under discussion among the leading naval authorities of the day, and among the members of the War Council. At the Admiralty it has been the question most debated in our secret circle. So far all opinions are favourable. So far no voice has been raised and no argument advanced against it. The writer of the Australian official history has thought it right to epitomize the story in the following concluding sentence:—

"So through a Churchill's excess of imagination, a layman's ignorance of artillery, and the fatal power of a young enthusiasm to convince older and slower brains, the tragedy of Gallipoli was born."

It is my hope that the Australian people, towards whom I have always felt a solemn responsibility, will not rest content with so crude, so inaccurate, so incomplete and so prejudiced a judgment, but will study the facts for themselves.

CHAPTER XXXVII

THE ACTION OF THE DOGGER BANK

Naval Uneasiness—Proposal to Withdraw the Battle-Cruisers from the Forth—Minutes—The Prime Minister's Request—Proposed Visit of Sir John Jellicoe to London—The Prime Minister Agrees—German Deliberations—Sir Arthur Wilson's News—Fixing the British Rendezvous—Lord Fisher concurs—Suspense—Daybreak at the Admiralty—Progress of the Action—Daybreak on the Dogger Bank—Contact with the Enemy—The *Lion* opens Fire—German Concentration against the *Lion*—The *Lion* crippled—Rear-Admiral Moore in Command—The Sinking of the *Blücher*—Severe Tests—Disappointment in Victory—My Letter to the Prime Minister of January 24—Proposal to Base the Grand Fleet on the Forth—My Letter to Sir John Jellicoe of January 26—Effects of the Victory at Home and Abroad.

DURING the middle of January uneasiness about our naval situation manifested itself in the high and secret circles of the Government.

Naval Uneasiness.

Sir John Jellicoe has described in his book what he considered the exceptional weakness of the Grand Fleet at this juncture. His letters to the First Sea Lord were filled with disquieting computations of the relative strength of the British and German navies in the event of a great battle. Several of his Dreadnoughts were undergoing their normal refits, and two more, the *Monarch* and the *Conqueror*, were temporarily disabled by a collision. He returned to the theory which he had developed in the preceding November, that the Germans had secretly armed their latest battleships with much heavier guns. But whereas in November the suggestion had been that four ships were now armed with 14-inch guns, it had by this time grown to six ships and 15-inch guns. There was of course no possibility of such a transformation having taken place. Our Intelligence had secured us identifications of these vessels out of dock and in movement at various dates which made it unbelievable that such enormous reconstructions could have been accomplished. I was, however, forced to combat these arguments and others equally alarming in character, and in particular to set up a Committee under the Third Sea Lord to allay the apprehension that this great re-armament had taken place.[1]

Proposal to Withdraw the Battle-cruisers from the Forth—Minutes.

Another request of the Commander-in-Chief caused me much embarrassment. He showed himself extremely anxious that the battle-cruisers which had been stationed at the Forth should be withdrawn to Cromarty in order to be in closer relation with the main Fleet. This proposal, if acceded to, would have deprived us of the means of acting with any effect against a German raid upon our coasts, should the enemy repeat the experiment which he had tried on December 16 against Hartlepool and Scarborough. Cromarty was as far from Heligoland as Scapa, and the withdrawal of Admiral Beatty and the battle-cruisers to this remote station seemed to involve us in unnecessary helplessness. I would have preferred indeed that the whole Battle Fleet should come south to the Forth. But if this could not yet be achieved, I strongly objected to the battle-cruisers being withdrawn from strategic relation with the enemy's fast vessels. I therefore minuted to the First Sea Lord on January 20 :

The battle-cruisers ought to be kept together, as then we shall always have

[1] See Appendix.

Photo: Elliott & Fry, Ltd.

ADMIRAL SIR ARTHUR WILSON.

One of the distinguished men who rendered signal services to their country on Admiralty duty, Sir Arthur Wilson is the subject of frequent mention in the course of the naval side of Mr. Churchill's narrative. This fine sailor had a notable record of service ashore and afloat. He won the Victoria Cross at El Teb on February 29, 1884.

a force strong enough to beat the whole of the German fast vessels. They will be quite out of reach for any action to protect the coasts of England if they go to Cromarty, which is the same distance from Heligoland as Scapa. I therefore think they should not be divided or moved from the Forth, unless Admiral Beatty reports that he finds the navigational conditions dangerous. The outer line defences of the Forth are now nearly completed. There is a considerable force of trawlers, torpedo boats and submarines there under the direction of Admiral Lowry, who has shown himself to be a most energetic and capable officer. I see no reason why they should be mined in there more than at Cromarty, and in any case they ought never to proceed to sea without the channels being properly swept beforehand. There is good seaplane protection at the Forth, which can be reinforced if necessary.

W. S. C.

I discussed this question and other matters connected with the strength of the Grand Fleet with Lord Fisher fully the next morning, and he agreed to the view which I took. I therefore minuted to the Chief of the Staff, on the afternoon of the 21st :

The battle-cruisers should be kept together at the Forth as at present, unless Admiral Beatty reports that he finds the navigational conditions dangerous. . . . Action accordingly.

W. S. C.

The Prime Minister's Request.

The repercussion of these misgivings manifested itself in the War Council ; and on January 21 the Prime Minister wrote informing me that he was summoning a meeting of the War Council for the 28th and that he desired that Sir John Jellicoe should be invited to be present. I became conscious that adverse currents were once more flowing around the Admiralty. I did not think that it was right to bring Sir John Jellicoe away from his fleet to London in order to attend a War Council during a period admittedly one of stringency in our own strength, and during which from every indication enemy activity might well be expected. I therefore decided to resist to the best of my ability the summoning of Sir John Jellicoe to London ; and having obtained Lord Fisher's agreement, I wrote on January 22 the following letter :—

Mr. Churchill to Mr. Asquith.
January 22, 1915.

There is no similarity between the position and functions of a naval Commander-in-Chief and of a modern General in the field. Military operations take a long time to develop and to carry through. The situation changes by gradations. The directions from the commanding General are given by telegraph or telephone. The larger the army the less direct is his contact with it, and the longer are the phases of every operation. With the Fleet, on the other hand, it is nothing or everything. The Grand Fleet has always been kept at four hours' notice to proceed to sea. Sir John Jellicoe, in the letter which I read to you, expresses the opinion that he ought not to be more than two hours away from his flagship, even during the short period of rest we have pressed him to take. At any moment news may arrive which will require the whole fleet to proceed to sea immediately.

The leadership of a fleet is personal in a sense and degree quite different from that of a large modern army. It all moves in one body in a strict drill formation; and the Admiral gives with his own lips the actual executive words which regulate its attack upon the enemy.

Photo: Russell.

ADMIRAL SIR HENRY OLIVER.

Admiral Sir Henry Oliver, like Admiral Sir Arthur Wilson, was an officer of great experience and ability. He was appointed Naval Secretary to the First Lord of the Admiralty at an early stage of the war, and in November of that year became Chief of the Staff. During the anxious months of 1914 and 1915, when the strain upon those responsible for the conduct of the war on the seas was at its greatest, Oliver was responsible for, and carried out with constancy, duties of the most onerous nature.

Proposed Visit of Sir John Jellicoe to London.

When Lord Fisher became First Sea Lord the matters to be discussed were so serious that we took the extraordinary step of inviting Sir John Jellicoe to come south to consult with us. This was before the Germans had attempted any raid upon our coast, and after a long period of complete passivity on their part. Before he could return to his flagship, the enemy made their abortive attack on Yarmouth. The whole fleet was sent to sea without the flagship; and if the enemy had intended a decisive operation, either the opportunity of bringing him to action would have been missed, or the decisive battle of the war would have been fought without the Commander-in-Chief. In consequence of this experience, we arranged that if any further consultation was necessary, we should go up to him and not bring him down to us. There have already been

two alarms in the last month. The 27th is the Emperor's birthday, and it is quite possible that something may be attempted then.

In these circumstances, I do not feel justified in telegraphing to Sir John Jellicoe saying, "If you think you can get away, do so." He knows perfectly well that he ought not to leave, and we know well that we ought not to direct him to leave, unless there is a graver military need for his presence here than there is for his presence with the fleet.

I should be, of course, quite ready to arrange for you or Mr. Balfour or Lord Kitchener to visit Sir John Jellicoe and discuss with him any and every aspect of the naval war. We believe that complete unity of thought on the main strategy exists between him and the Admiralty. The most intimate relations of personal friendship prevail between Sir John Jellicoe and the First Sea Lord; they write to each other every day, and sometimes several times a day. I know of no reason, either personal or of policy, which requires external intervention; but if such intervention were necessary, it would be much more in accordance with the public interest and safety that members of the War Council should visit Sir John Jellicoe than that he should be brought down here.

The First Sea Lord desires me to say that these views have his full agreement.

I must point out also that the Admiralty is not merely an administrative Department, but is actually carrying on the war, and that orders are being issued constantly from this Office to ships and squadrons in immediate contact with the enemy. At this present time three separate operations, two of a very serious nature, are being prepared by us and are imminent. I hope, therefore, that we may continue to be sustained by your full confidence, which has helped us to achieve satisfactory results in the first six months of the war.

The Prime Minister Agrees—German Deliberations.

I sent this letter over to Mr. Asquith on the same morning by my Naval

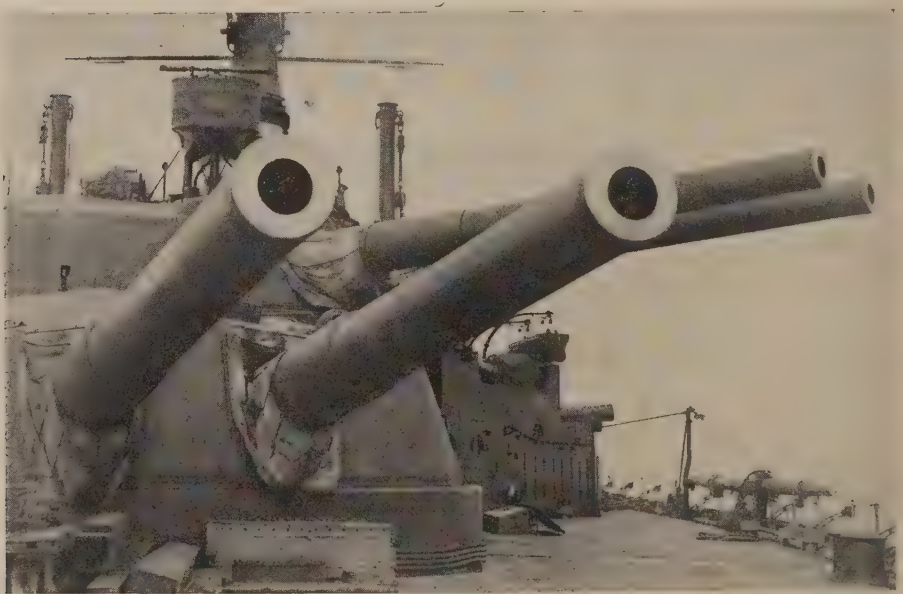


Photo: Cribb.

GUNS OF H.M.S. *AJAX*.

A close-up view of the exterior of gun-turrets on H.M.S. *Ajax*, showing the guns trained. The modern turret is an armoured structure under cover of which gun crews work. It is capable of being moved round by means of hydraulic or electrical power in order that the guns may be kept bearing on their target.

Secretary, Commodore de Bartolomé. This officer, who knew all the facts and was capable of explaining them with the utmost lucidity and tact, succeeded in re-assuring the Prime Minister, and returned an hour later to the Admiralty with this satisfactory news.

* * * *

We have seen the nature of the discussions which proceeded between the German naval staff and the Emperor, and the rigorous restrictions which had been imposed upon the German Fleet. In consequence of these Imperial decisions, Admiral von Ingenohl arranged to send his most powerful battle squadron, the Third, consisting of the "Kaisers" and the "Königs," into the Baltic for training. He intended, however, that there should first be another enterprise of a limited character by the Fleet in the North Sea.

Owing to bad weather this enterprise was postponed from day to day.

Towards the middle of January he and the German naval staff led themselves to believe that a great British naval offensive was imminent. They had heard about the dummy warships which were being constructed in Belfast, and they connected these with a plan for running block ships into the river mouths of the Heligoland Bight. They passed some days in a fever heat of excitement and at a high pitch of readiness.

On the morning of the 19th a German seaplane, sixty miles out from Heligoland, sighted "numerous English ships bound upon an easterly course, among them several battle-cruisers and close upon a hundred small craft." This then they thought was the great blocking operation. It was, in fact, a reconnaissance in force by the Harwich destroyer and submarine flotillas supported by the battle-cruisers. When nothing happened and later reports showed the Germans that a large part of the British Fleet had approached their coast and had then retired, von Ingenohl concluded that the blocking operation had been abandoned or at any rate postponed. He proceeded forthwith on the 20th to relax his special precautions, and on the 21st sent the Third Squadron through the Kiel Canal for their exercises in the Baltic. The contradictory and inconsequent decisions which followed are sourly described in the German Official History.[1]

Photo: Daily Mirror.

HIDDEN DEATH.

Mines, riding at anchor below the surface of the sea, were responsible for the loss of many a fine ship during the years of the Great War. Here, one of these deadly weapons, having been found adrift, has just been exploded by means of a rifle bullet.

"After this general relaxation of the state of readiness it would have been quite natural if, in accordance with the guiding lines laid down in the Commander-in-Chief's report and in his war diary, he had now shown still less initiative than before as regards offensive operations in the North Sea. But the weather improved just at this time, and Vice-Admiral Eckerman, the Chief of Staff, wanted to take the opportunity of making up for inactivity during the bad weather. Accordingly on January 22

[1] Chapter VI.

he submitted the following suggestions to the Commander-in-Chief in writing :—

" ' If the weather to-morrow remains as it has been this afternoon and evening, a cruiser and destroyer advance to the Dogger Bank would in my opinion be very advisable. No special preparations are needed ; an order issued to-morrow morning to the Senior Officer, Scouting Forces, would be sufficient.

" ' Proceed out at night, arrive in the forenoon, return in the evening.'

" Admiral von Ingenohl," says the German historian, " at once realized that this proposal was in contradiction to the guiding lines just laid down, and he made the following marginal note :—

" ' I should prefer it if such advances were made only when the Fleet can proceed in company. Unfortunately this is impossible at the moment.' "

Nevertheless he gave his consent. . . .

" At 10.25 the next morning the following order was sent to Rear-Admiral von Hipper by Wireless Telegraphy :—

" ' First and Second Scouting Groups, Senior Officer of Destroyers and two flotillas to be selected by the Senior Officer Scouting Forces are to reconnoitre the Dogger Bank. They are to leave harbour this evening after dark and to return to-morrow evening after dark.' "

* * * *

Sir Arthur Wilson's News.

On the 23rd Lord Fisher, who in spite of several divergences of view which will be dealt with later, had been very staunch and good to me over the Jellicoe incident, was laid up with a cold. I therefore visited him at Archway House, which adjoins the Admiralty buildings. We had a long and pleasant talk over our various problems. It was nearly noon when I regained my room in the Admiralty. I had hardly sat down when the door opened quickly and in marched Sir Arthur Wilson unannounced. He looked at me intently, and there was a glow in his eye. Behind him came Oliver with charts and compasses.

" First Lord, these fellows are coming out again."

" When ? "

" To-night. We have just got time to get Beatty there."

We sent successively at brief intervals the following telegrams :—

Admiralty to Commodore (T),[1] Harwich.

Negative plan Z. All your destroyers and light cruisers will be wanted to-night. Negative sending destroyers to Sheerness for escort.

Admiralty to Vice-Admiral " Lion," Rosyth.

Get ready to sail at once with all battle-cruisers and light cruisers and sea-going destroyers. Further orders follow.

Admiralty to Commander-in-Chief Grand Fleet.

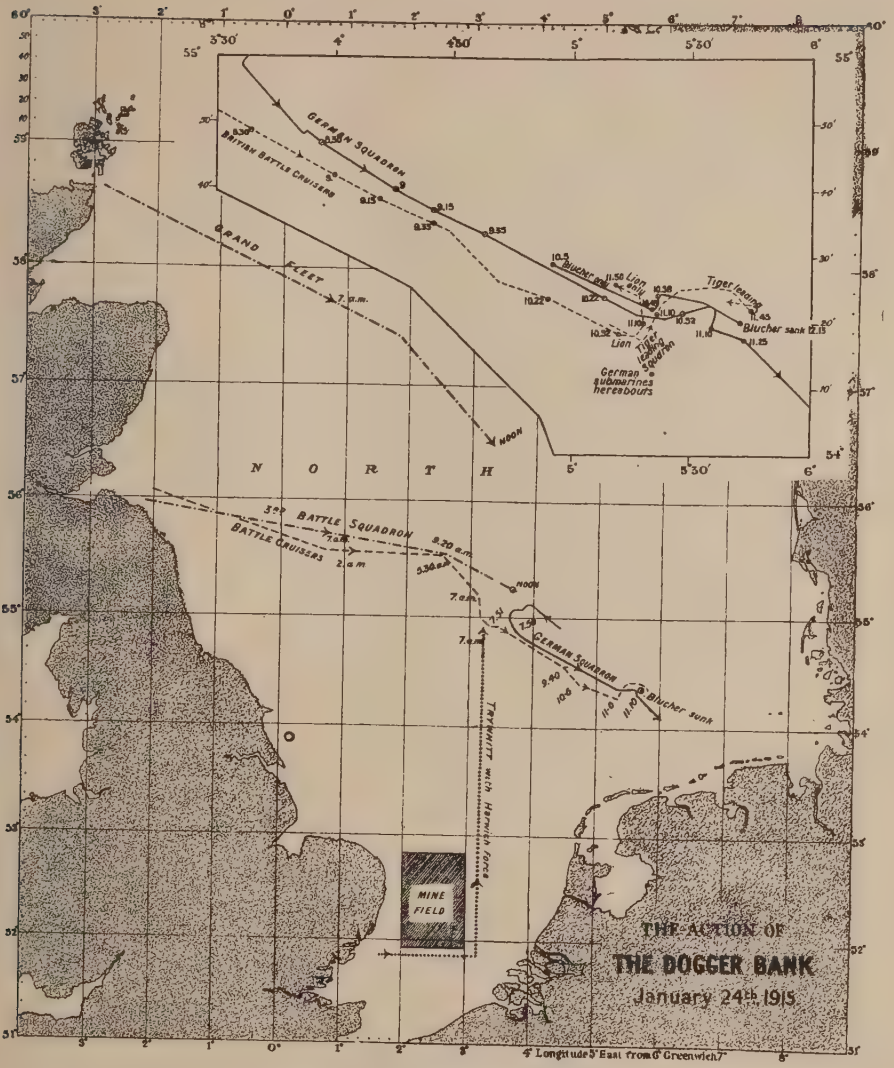
First, Second and Fourth Battle Squadrons, cruisers and light cruisers should be ready to sail after dark this evening.

Fixing the British Rendezvous.

This done, Sir Arthur explained briefly the conclusions which he had formed from the intercepted German message which our cryptographers had translated, and from other intelligence of which he was a master. All the German fast vessels were putting to sea at dark, and a raid upon the British coast was clearly to be expected. My companions then addressed themselves to fixing the rendezvous for the various British forces. The chart and the compass circles showed in a moment that only Beatty from the Forth and Tyrwhitt from Harwich could intercept the Germans before they could strike and escape. The Grand Fleet could not reach the scene till the next afternoon, nor could any ships stationed at Cromarty. There was, however, just time for Beatty and Tyrwhitt to join forces at daylight near the Dogger Bank.

Wilson and Oliver had already drawn on the chart, with what afterwards proved to be almost exact accuracy, the probable line of the enemy's course.

[1] The officer commanding the Flotillas, Commodore Tyrwhitt, was styled in naval parlance Commodore of Torpedoes, or for short, " Commodore (T)." Similarly the Captain of Submarines was called "Captain (S)."



ACTION OF THE DOGGER BANK.

Chart showing the progress, hour by hour, of the British and German ships during the naval action of January 24, 1915.

They stepped it out with the compasses hour by hour, at what they guessed would be the German speed, till it reached our coasts. They then drew from the Forth and Harwich the intercepting lines of Beatty and of Tyrwhitt. The intention was that the British forces should meet and be united at daybreak at some point about ten miles, or half an hour behind the enemy after he had passed westward, and consequently be *between* him and *his* home. We discussed whether we could run the risk of a more adventurous scoop, i.e. a rendezvous for our ships still further to the eastward. This would give more certainty of being between the enemy and his home, but also more chance of

Photo: Renard.

THE GERMAN BATTLE-CRUISER *MOLTKE*.

Launched at Hamburg in 1911, the *Moltke* had a speed of 27 knots and mounted ten 11-inch, twelve 5·9-inch and twelve smaller guns. She took part in the action of the Dogger Bank under Admiral von Hipper. She survived this action, and was in commission throughout the war but, being one of the German ships surrendered at Scapa Flow under the terms of the Peace Treaty, was sent to the bottom by her own crew.

missing him if the weather became thick; and remembering what had happened on December 16, this last possibility seemed a very serious one. Thus the rendezvous was fixed for 7 the next morning the 24th, in 55° 13′ North, 3° 12′ East, i.e. 180 miles from Heligoland and almost in a line drawn from Heligoland to the Firth of Forth.[1]

The following telegram was sent to the Commander-in-Chief with the Grand Fleet at Scapa, to Admiral Bradford with the Third Battle Squadron, to Admiral Beatty with the battle-cruisers at Rosyth, and to Commodore Tyrwhitt with the light cruisers and destroyers at Harwich: [2]

"Four German battle-cruisers, six light cruisers and twenty-two destroyers will sail this evening to scout on Dogger Bank, probably returning to-morrow evening. All available battle-cruisers, light cruisers, and destroyers from Rosyth should proceed to a rendezvous in 55° 13′ N., 3° 12′ E., arriving at 7.0 a.m. to-morrow. Commodore (T) is to proceed with all available destroyers and light cruisers from Harwich to join Vice-Admiral *Lion*, at 7.0 a.m. at above rendezvous. If enemy is sighted by Commodore (T) while crossing their line of advance, they should be attacked. W[ireless] T[elegraphy] is not to be used unless absolutely necessary. Telegram has been sent to Commander-in-Chief Home Fleet; Vice-Admiral *Lion*; Vice-Admiral Third Battle Squadron; and Commodore (T)."

Lord Fisher Concurs—Suspense.

Nearly an hour had passed in these calculations and discussions, and meanwhile the First Sea Lord was still unaware of what was taking place. I therefore asked Sir Arthur Wilson and the Chief of the Staff to take the charts and the draft telegram over to Archway House, and unless there was any difference of opinion, to despatch it forthwith. Lord Fisher was quite content with the decisions which were proposed, and action was taken accordingly.

The reader may imagine the tense

[1] The attention of the reader is directed to the Map and Plan facing p. 545.

[2] This telegram has already been published in Mr. Filson Young's account of this action, *With the Battle Cruisers*, p. 174.

feelings with which the long hours of the afternoon and evening were loaded. We shared our secret with none. That night I attended a dinner which the French Ambassador was giving to Monsieur Millerand, then Minister of War and in London on a mission of consequence. One felt separated from the distinguished company who gathered there, by a film of isolated knowledge and overwhelming inward preoccupation. In December we had hardly credited our sources of information. All was uncertain. It had even seemed probable that nothing would occur. Now with that experience wrought into one's being, only one thought could reign—battle at dawn! Battle for the first time in history between mighty super-Dreadnought ships! And there was added a thrilling sense of a Beast of Prey moving stealthily forward hour by hour towards the Trap.

* * * *

We were afoot the next morning while it was still dark, and Fisher, Wilson, Oliver and I were all in the War Room when daylight began to grow out of doors. The ordinary night staff of the various

Photo : Roland Gorbold.

THE GERMAN ARMOURED CRUISER *BLÜCHER.*

Sunk in action at the sea battle in the North Sea on January 24, 1915. During the course of this action the *Blücher* was severely handled; many hits were registered upon her, including a salvo on the water-line. Less than two hours after fire was opened the *Blücher*, disabled, was falling out of the line. She was burning furiously and was presently to heel over and go down with the majority of her officers and men.

departments were still at their posts. Suddenly, with the sureness of destiny and the punctuality of a parade, a telegram intercepted from the Fleet was laid before us. It was from the 1st Light Cruiser Squadron to the *Lion* (Beatty) and the *Iron Duke* (Jellicoe) :

(*Sent* 7.30 a.m. *Received* 8.1 a.m.)

" Urgent. Enemy in sight. Lat. 54° 54′ N., Long. 3° 30′ E. Steering East. Consisting of battle-cruisers and cruisers, number unknown."

And two minutes later :—

" Urgent. Lat. 55° 24′ N., Long. 4° 15′ E. Enemy in sight consisting of cruisers and destroyers, battle-cruisers, light cruisers, steering between South-east and South."

So once again it had all come true !

There can be few purely mental experiences more charged with cold excitement than to follow, almost from minute to minute, the phases of a great naval action from the silent rooms of the Admiralty. Out on blue water in the fighting ships amid the stunning detonations of the cannonade, fractions of the event unfold themselves to the corporeal eye. There is the sense of action at its highest ; there is the wrath of battle ; there is the intense, self-effacing, physical or mental toil. But in Whitehall only the clock ticks, and quiet men enter with quick steps laying slips of pencilled paper before other men equally silent who draw lines and scribble calculations, and point with the finger or make brief subdued comments. Telegram succeeds telegram at a few minutes' interval as they are picked up and decoded, often in the wrong sequence, frequently of dubious import ; and out of these a picture always flickering and changing rises in the mind, and imagination strikes out around it at every stage flashes of hope or fear.

Daybreak at the Admiralty—Progress of the Action.

1st Light Cruiser Squadron to Commander-in-Chief.

(*Sent* 8 a.m. *Received* 8.20 a.m.)

Enemy's ships have altered course to N.E.

" Lion " to Commander-in-Chief.

(*Sent* 8.30 a.m. *Received* 8.37 a.m.)

Enemy sighted consisting four battle-cruisers, four light cruisers, destroyers number unknown, bearing S. 61 E. 11 miles. My position Lat. 54° 50′ N., Long. 3° 37′ E. Course S. 40 E. 26 knots.

Commander-in-Chief to 3rd Battle Squadron.

(*Sent* 9 a.m. *Received* 9.18 a.m.)

Steer towards Heligoland.

Commodore Tyrwhitt to Commander-in-Chief.

(*Sent* 9.5 a.m. *Received* 9.27 a.m.)

1st Flotilla and 3rd Flotilla are astern of battle-cruisers. 2 miles.

Commander-in-Chief to 3rd Battle Squadron.

(*Sent* 9.20 a.m. *Received* 9.28 a.m.)

Act to support 1st Battle Cruiser Squadron.

" Lion " to Commander-in-Chief.

(*Sent* 9.30 a.m. *Received* 9.48 a.m.)

Am engaging enemy battle-cruisers. Range 16,000 yards.

1st Light Cruiser Squadron to " Lion."

(*Sent* 10.8 a.m. *Received* 10.18 a.m.)

Enemy detached one rearmost battle-cruiser. Am driven off.

1st Light Cruiser Squadron to " Lion."

(*Sent* 10.21 a.m. *Received* 10.27 a.m.)

Am keeping touch with enemy.

1st Light Cruiser Squadron to Commander-in-Chief and " Lion."

(*Sent* 10.15 a.m. *Received* 10.59 a.m.)

Enemy's airships E.S.E.

We had not heard the *Lion* speak for nearly an hour and a half, during the whole of which period presumably she and the First Battle Cruiser Squadron were in full battle. Evidently Sir John Jellicoe also felt the weight of this oppressive silence.

Commander-in-Chief to " Lion."

(*Sent* 11.1 a.m. *Received by Admiralty* 11.9 a.m.)

Are you in action ?

Another twenty minutes' silence, seeming much longer, ensued. Then at last at 11.37 came in the following message not from the *Lion* or the First Battle Cruiser Squadron, but from the Senior Officer commanding the *Second* Battle Cruiser Squadron to the Commander-in-Chief :—

"Heavy engagement with enemy battle-cruisers. Lat. 54° 19′ N., Long. 5° 05′ E."

Some one said, "Moore is reporting; evidently the *Lion* is knocked out."

Across my mind there rose a purely irrelevant picture. I thought of the Memorial Services I had so often attended in Westminster Abbey: the crowd and uniforms, the coffin with the Union Jack, the searching music, Beatty! That vision at least was not true; but, alas, too true indeed, "The *Lion* knocked out."

* * * *

Daybreak on the Dogger Bank—Contact with the Enemy.

It is time to escape from the tense atmosphere of the War Room and watch the squadrons on blue water.

When the first light of the clear winter's morning shone on a calm sea, Admiral Beatty with his five battle-cruisers (*Lion*, *Tiger*, *Princess Royal*, *New Zealand* and *Indomitable*) and four light cruisers reached the rendezvous. Ten minutes later he sighted Commodore Tyrwhitt in the *Arethusa* with seven of his fastest "M" class destroyers, constituting the van of the Harwich force, and almost simultaneously there came the flash of the first gun. The *Aurora*, following the Commodore as fast as possible at a few miles' distance, with the *Undaunted* and twenty-eight more destroyers of the First and Third Flotillas, came into contact with Admiral von Hipper who, with the *Seydlitz*, *Moltke*, *Derfflinger* and *Blücher*, accompanied by four light cruisers and twenty-two German destroyers, was steaming along the very course and almost at the very moment which Wilson and Oliver had forecast. The *Aurora* opened fire upon a German light cruiser, and signalled immediately that she was engaged "with the High Seas fleet." Thus all three lines of advance met almost at a single point.

We have seen the causes that led to Admiral von Hipper's excursion. As day broke his ships were spread in line abreast on a considerable front, searching no doubt for British fishing vessels and light patrol forces. What followed is extremely simple. The moment the German Commander discovered himself in the presence of numerous British warships, including the battle-cruisers, his decision was taken. He collected his ships, turned completely round, and ran for home with the utmost possible despatch. Meanwhile Admiral Beatty, working up his speed with equal zeal, had already passed somewhat to the southward of the Germans, and by 8 o'clock was steaming on a parallel course about fourteen miles behind them. A tremendous race of all the fastest vessels in the two navies now began. Because of the danger of the retreating enemy dropping mines behind him, all the British vessels avoided his actual wake, Commodore Goodenough and his four light cruisers keeping slightly to the north, Tyrwhitt with his whole force of destroyers and cruisers keeping slightly to the south, and the British battle-cruisers further southward still.

In pursuit on land the battlefield is stationary and the troops move; in a stern chase at sea the ships alter their relative positions very gradually, while the battlefield rushes past as fast as a horse can gallop. In this posture, therefore, all parties to the event continued for a spell. Meanwhile the speed of the British battle-cruisers developed continually, and it soon became evident that they were gaining on the Germans. By 8.30 26 knots was realized, or one knot more than the designed speeds of the *Indomitable* and the *New Zealand*. Admiral Beatty signalled "Well done, *Indomitable*," and demanded 27, 28 and 29 knots in succession at brief intervals. These immense speeds could only be approached by his three leading ships: the *Lion* in the van, the *Tiger* and the *Princess Royal*. It was his intention to overtake the enemy and bring him to battle in the first instance with his three ships against four.

The distance between the rearmost Germans and the leading British ships was now diminishing steadily. So great was the speed of the super-Dreadnoughts that the destroyers could barely hold their own with them. As the event had fallen, at the moment of contact Tyrwhitt and his forty vessels were pursuing a course which led between the hostile battle-cruiser squadrons. This was inconvenient, because by advancing and drawing abreast of the battle-cruisers—as did the fast "M" boats—they would obstruct their view with enormous clouds of smoke. On the other hand, at the pace at which all were going, it was not possible to shift them to the southern flank where they could have pressed ahead at a minimum of 27 knots. To fall back behind the British battle-cruisers and to turn off obliquely would have thrown them out of the hunt for good and all. They were therefore not able to overtake and head off the enemy, and remained somewhat shut in slightly astern of and inside the British battle-cruiser line.

The *Lion* Opens Fire.

About 9 o'clock the *Lion* opened fire.[1] Up to 1914 the greatest range for battle practice had been 10,000 yards. In the spring of that year I had ordered an experimental firing at 14,000 yards, when to universal astonishment considerable accuracy was immediately attained. But this lesson had not been digested when the war broke out. Now in the first action between super-Dreadnought ships, the pursuers spontaneously opened fire at the hitherto unprecedented range of 20,000 yards. The second shot passed over the *Blücher*, and the *Lion* now began a deliberate fire upon this ship. As the range gradually shortened, the *Tiger* and the *Princess Royal* joined in, and hits upon the *Blücher* were almost immediately observed. At a quarter-past nine the Germans replied.

The *Lion* now reached out after the *Derfflinger*, while the *Tiger* and the *Princess Royal* continued firing upon the *Blücher*. The fire became effective on both these two German ships. The third salvo hit the *Blücher* on the water-line, reducing her speed; the fourth wrought tremendous damage, disabling two after-turrets and between 200 and 300 men. At 9.35, the *New Zealand* having come into range of the *Blücher*, Admiral Beatty signalled his ships to engage their opposite numbers, ship for ship, he himself firing at the German flagship, *Seydlitz*, which was leading the retreat. The first shell of the *Lion* that hit the *Seydlitz* at over 17,000 yards range inflicted fearful damage, shattering her stern and wrecking both her rear turrets. "The entire gun crews of both turrets," wrote Admiral Scheer, "perished very quickly; the flames rose above the turrets as high as a house."

German Concentration against the *Lion*.

Meanwhile, however, the enemy had also begun to hit. Owing to a misunderstanding of her orders, the *Tiger*, as well as the *Lion*, was firing upon the *Seydlitz* and missing her badly. The *Princess Royal* was rightly engaging the *Derfflinger*; the *New Zealand*, the *Blücher*; and the *Indomitable* was not within range. Thus the *Moltke* was free from all attack and able to fire undisturbed on the *Lion*.[1] All the three leading German ships concentrated their fire upon the *Lion*, and for the next hour and a half this noble vessel, hurled forward at her utmost speed, carried the dauntless flag of the Admiral into the teeth of the storm. The sea rose in mighty fountains all around her, which fell in hundreds of tons upon her deck. The splinters from shells bursting close alongside filled the air with fragments. From half-past nine onwards she was repeatedly struck. A little before ten her foremost turret was smashed in and one of its guns disabled. A few minutes later her armour was pierced by an 11-inch shell. At 10.18

[1] I have followed in the main the account given by the official historian, modified by the narrative of Commander Filson Young, an eye-witness in the foretop of the *Lion*, and corrected and supplemented by other first-hand information.

[1] The *Official Naval History* has by mistake interchanged the *Moltke* and the *Derfflinger*. According to the German accounts it is clear that the *Moltke* was the ship running free and that she alone had no antagonist and no casualties.

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

GERMAN BATTLE-CRUISER *DERFFLINGER.*

Another of the ships of Admiral von Hipper's squadron present at the action of the Dogger Bank. With the *Moltke* and the *Seydlitz*, the *Derfflinger* was hotly engaged by Admiral Beatty's ship the *Lion*, but when the British flagship, disabled, was forced to fall out of the line, the German ships, profiting by the temporary confusion which arose from the sudden cessation of direction, succeeded in making good their escape.

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

THE GERMAN BATTLE CRUISER *SEYDLITZ.*

The *Seydlitz*, a vessel of 25,000 tons and a speed of 26·5 knots, narrowly escaped, at the Dogger Bank action, sharing the fate of the *Blücher*. As it was she was severely damaged and reached port with difficulty in a sinking condition. Repaired and put once more into commission, she was ultimately, in 1918, surrendered to the British, and on June 21, 1919, was sunk by her crew at Scapa Flow.

THE LAST OF

One of the most wonderful photographs taken in the course of the whole war, this remarkable plunge. Hundreds of men can be seen swarming on the side of the doomed cruiser. Some are discipline was maintained to the last. The bell used to call the ship's company to church parade the *Blücher*, with three more for the Kaiser, and, after singing "Die Wacht am Rhein," the men enemy as they could pick up, but of her crew of nearly

Photo: Daily Mail.

THE *BLÜCHER.*

picture shows the last moments of the *Blücher* as, heeling over, she is about to take her final already in the icy water of the North Sea. From accounts subsequently given by survivors, rang for the last time and the men assembled as best they could. Three cheers were given for were given permission to leave the ship. Boats from the British ships saved as many of the twelve hundred more than nine hundred perished.

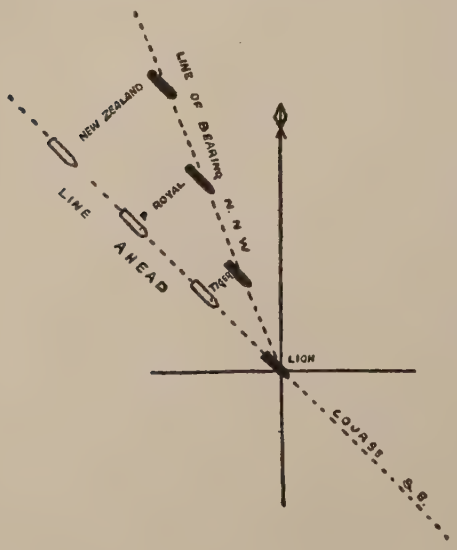
two 12-inch shells from the *Derfflinger* struck her—one piercing the armour, bursting behind it and flooding several compartments; the other driving in an armoured plate below the water-line.

The Admiral, disdaining the conning tower and standing with his staff upon the open bridge, continued to drive his flagship forward at her extreme speed, which was not yet impaired, zigzagging from time to time to spoil the accuracy of the enemy's fire. The situation was favourable. None of our battle-cruisers had been seriously damaged, and the *Indomitable* was available to deal with any wounded enemy ships. The critical period of the action was now approaching.

The *Lion* Crippled.

At 10.22 Admiral Beatty finding his ships greatly hampered by smoke interference, ordered the battle-cruisers to "Form on a Line of Bearing N.N.W.,"[1] and to proceed at their utmost speed. His intention was to avoid the smoke and splashes and bring the rear of his squadron into closer action with the enemy, who had formed on a Line of Bearing to Port of the *Seydlitz*. The German flotillas by altering their course to starboard threatened to draw him across their wake, i.e. into water where their mines and torpedoes might be encountered. This Parthian menace forced Admiral Beatty to desist from his closing movement, and to resume his parallel course under a tremendous fire.

[1] "Line of Bearing" is an échelon formation thus :—



The *Blücher* was now burning and falling out of the German line; and at 10.45 Admiral Beatty ordered his rearmost ship, the *Indomitable*, which was some distance astern but rapidly overhauling the *Blücher*, to "Attack the enemy breaking away to the Northward," meaning thereby the *Blücher*. He made further efforts to close, but at 10.52 while in the hottest action, with the *Seydlitz*, the *Moltke* and the *Derfflinger*, the *Lion*, which had already received fourteen hits, was suddenly struck in a spot vital to her speed and fatal, as it proved, to our complete victory. Her port engine failed, she listed 10 degrees and her speed sank in a few minutes to 15 knots.

At this moment (10.45) when the *Lion* was falling out of the line, and the *Tiger*, the *Princess Royal* and *New Zealand* were drawing swiftly past her, the wash of a periscope on the starboard bow was reported from the *Lion's* foretop to Admiral Beatty, and seen by both the Admiral and his staff. German submarines were, as we now know, actually in this area at the time. To avoid this new danger by a quick manœuvre, he ordered the whole squadron to turn 8 points to port together, i.e. across the rear of the enemy and at right angles to his own previous course.

This movement was intended to be of the briefest duration, and four minutes later the Admiral modified it by the signal "Course North East." Matters now, however, passed completely beyond his control. The *Lion* was falling far astern of her consorts. Her wireless had been shot away, her searchlights were smashed, and only two signal halyards were left. Thus at this crisis when the great vessels, friend and foe, were shearing through the water at nearly 30 miles an hour and, once deflected, were altering their relationship in space every second, the *Lion*, carrying in Admiral Beatty the whole spirit and direction of the battle, was crippled and almost dumb. Her last two signals were "Attack the rear

of the enemy," and then as a parting injunction, " Keep closer to the enemy. Repeat the signal the Admiral is now making." But the signal flags blowing end on were difficult to read and none of the battle-cruisers took in the final order.

Rear-Admiral Moore in Command.

It was at this juncture and in these circumstances that Rear-Admiral Moore, whose flag was flying in the *New Zealand*, now third in the line, succeeded to the command. He was an officer whose distinguished abilities had made him invaluable as Third Sea Lord during the greater part of my tenure at the Admiralty. He had earnestly desired a sea command adequate to his rank and services. His wish had been accorded, and now almost at once Fortune presented herself to him in mocking and dubious guise. He was not certain at first that he had succeeded to the command. It was never formally transferred. He did not know why Admiral Beatty had suddenly turned so sharply to the north. No hostile submarines had been reported to him.

The signal " Attack the rear of the enemy " was hoisted by the *Lion* before the compass signal " Course North East " had been hauled down. Both signals were therefore read by all the battle-cruisers as one, and this was interpreted by Rear-Admiral Moore as a direct order to attack the forlorn and isolated *Blücher*, which actually bore north-east from him at that moment. Neither Admiral Moore nor any of the battle-cruisers ever received the signal " Keep closer to the enemy." He therefore suffered the *Tiger*, his leading ship, to continue on her course under the same misconstruction of Admiral Beatty's orders which she had independently sustained. He gave no order of any kind until 11.52, nearly an hour after the *Lion* had fallen out of the line.

The Sinking of the *Blücher*.

The whole operation therefore went to pieces. All four of the British battle-cruisers ceased firing on the retreating Germans, and began to circle round the wretched *Blücher* which, already a terrible wreck, was being engaged by the light cruisers and the " M " destroyers. At ten minutes past twelve the *Blücher*, fighting with desperate courage to the last, rolled over and sank beneath the waves. Of her crew of nearly twelve hundred men, two hundred and fifty were picked up by the British destroyers and light cruisers; and more would have been saved, but for the intervention of a German seaplane which dropped its bombs indiscriminately on the drowning Germans and the British rescuers. Meanwhile Admiral von Hipper, delivered by a single fateful shot from almost certain destruction, continued to make off at his best speed towards Heligoland, then eighty miles away, two out of his three remaining ships burning fiercely, cumbered with wreckage and crowded with dead and wounded. Thus for the second time, when already in the jaws of destruction, the German Battle Cruiser Squadron escaped.

Severe Tests.

In the opinion of his professional superiors at the Admiralty Rear-Admiral Moore had warrant for what he did or did not do. He had not departed from a strict interpretation of the actual orders taken in by his ships. These orders, uncorrected by the receipt of the final signal, " Keep closer to the enemy," seemed to suggest that some reason unknown to Rear-Admiral Moore had led the most daring of our naval leaders to break off the action. It is not easy to fix the precise moment, while the *Lion* was dropping astern, when the command actually passed to him. The greater his confidence in Admiral Beatty, the slower he would be to assume control and the more impressive the signal to change the course across the enemy's rear would appear.

A quarter of an hour might well have been accounted for in this way; and a quarter of an hour was a long time. Ships just holding their own in pursuit or in station on other ships, with only a small margin of speed to spare, lose distance very quickly once the parallel course is departed from. It was certainly open to him, once he was sure that he was in command and that Admiral Beatty was out of it, to

Photo: Cribb.

ADMIRAL BEATTY'S FLAGSHIP: THE *LION*.

This fine ship of 26,350 tons and a speed of 31 knots carried Admiral Beatty's flag during the battle of the Dogger Bank. Thanks to the damage caused by a shell from one of the enemy cruisers, the *Lion* was disabled, and her intrepid admiral, thrown out of touch with his squadron, was unable to complete the task so well begun.

resume the parallel course and reopen the action with von Hipper's disappearing vessels. But a long delay must have ensued before he could have come within range; and his squadron would all the time have been drawing nearer to Heligoland and the German High Seas Fleet.

* * * *

Disappointment in Victory.

The tests to which the Admirals in high command are subjected during a naval engagement are far more searching than those of Generals in a battle on land. The Admiral actually leads the Fleet in person and is probably under as severe fire and in as great danger as any man in it; a General, whatever his wishes, has no choice but to remain in his headquarters in complete tranquillity, ten, fifteen or even twenty miles away. The General is forced to rely on the reports of others which flow upwards to him from Brigades, Divisions and Corps, and transmits his orders through the same channel after consultation with his staff; the Admiral sees with his own eyes, and with his own lips pronounces the orders which move the whole mighty event. The phases of a naval action succeed one another at intervals of two or three minutes; whereas in modern battles two or three hours, and sometimes even days, elapse before fresh decisions are required from an Army Commander. Once the sea battle is joined the whole event is in the hand of the Admiral or his successor as long as he can signal; whereas on land, after zero hour has struck, it escapes for the time being almost entirely from the control of the General.

There are a hundred ways of explaining a defeat on land and of obscuring the consequences of any mistake. Of these the simplest is to continue the attack next day in a different direction or under

different conditions. But on the sea no chance returns. The enemy disappears for months and the battle is over. The Admiral's orders uttered from minute to minute are recorded for ever in the log-book of every vessel engaged. The great ships, unless their mechanism ceases to function, obey punctually and inexorably the directions they receive from the human will. The course and speed of every vessel at every moment are recorded. The value of every vessel sunk is known. Their names are published. The charts and compasses are produced, and with almost exact accuracy the position and movement of every ship can be fixed in relation to every other. The battlefield is flat and almost unvarying. Exact explanations can be required at every point, and the whole intense scene can be reconstructed and analysed in the glare of history. This should always be borne in mind in forming judgments.

* * * *

While these grave matters had so decided themselves, Admiral Beatty, far astern and believing the chase was being continued, had resolved to quit the wounded *Lion* and, hoisting his flag upon the destroyer *Attack*, hastened forward to overtake the battle. Instead, somewhat after noon, he met his ships coming back towards him. In the first bitterness at learning that the rest of the enemy had escaped he ordered the chase to be resumed, although there was now no chance of its succeeding. Twenty or thirty precious minutes had been lost, and with them twenty or thirty thousand yards. This was irretrievable. And realizing that further pursuit was useless, he turned back and steered towards the *Lion* to make provision for her safety and return to the Forth.

The condition of the *Lion* seemed for some time critical: her speed fell to 8 knots, her list increased, and serious anxiety arose. Her engines finally became incapable of steaming at all. She was taken in tow by the *Indomitable*, and in this fashion began her long, slow

Painting: Arthur J. W. Burgess.

THE *LION* IN ACTION.

This illustration of the British ships, led by the *Lion*, in action with the German squadron at the battle of the Dogger Bank is reproduced from a picture painted by Arthur J. W. Burgess and exhibited in the Royal Academy of 1915. The *Lion* is seen to be driving through the angry waters of the North Sea at her maximum speed, with the *Tiger* close astern. Cascades of water are rising on all sides as heavy shells from the enemy ships plunge into the sea.

and dangerous return to the Forth. Sixty destroyers under Commodore Tyrwhitt surrounded her in ceaseless evolutions, protecting her from torpedo or submarine attack all through the night of the 24th and through the 25th. "If submarines are seen," ordered the Commodore, "shoot and ram them without regard to your neighbours." At daylight on the 26th the *Lion*, amid cheering crowds, was brought safely to anchor at Rosyth.

* * * *

My Letter to the Prime Minister of January 24.

After the action had been finally broken off I sent a messenger by motor-car with the following letter to the Prime Minister who was at Walmer :—

Mr. Churchill to Mr. Asquith.

January 24, 1915, 3.45 p.m.

This morning Beatty, with 5 battle-cruisers and a superior force of light cruisers and destroyers, met *Derfflinger*, *Seydlitz*, *Moltke*, and *Blücher* with light cruisers and destroyers in the middle of the North Sea. The Germans ran for home immediately, and a fierce pursuit ensued, producing a severe action between the battle-cruisers on both sides.

The *Lion* is damaged, but is returning home at 12 knots. Beatty has shifted his flag to the *Princess Royal*.

The *Blücher* (15,500 tons, 25½ knots), practically a battle-cruiser, though with 12 8·2-inch guns and 880 men,[1] [is] sunk. Two other German battle-cruisers reported seriously injured. Deserting the *Blücher*, the Germans managed to make good their escape into their own torpedo area, where we thought better not to follow.

I have no details so far of the destroyer and light-cruiser fighting, but *Meteor*, one of our destroyers, is reported

[1] She actually had nearly 1,200 men on board.

By permission of "Illustrated London News."

ADMIRAL BEATTY ON THE DESTROYER *ATTACK*.

When Admiral Beatty learned that the damage to his flagship was serious and incapable of even temporary repair, he summoned the destroyer *Attack*, and having transferred his flag to her, set out in pursuit of his disappearing squadron. He is seen here on the bridge of *Attack* immediately after the transfer has been accomplished. This photograph was taken from the deck of the crippled *Lion*.

Photo: "Illustrated London News."

THE *BLÜCHER* ON FIRE.

This photograph, taken a short time before that given on pp. 552 and 553, shows the ill-fated cruiser ablaze and crippled shortly before she began to turn over.

damaged, and I am hopeful that some business has been done. Our ships are now returning.

This action gives us a good line for judging the results of a general battle. It may be roughly said that we should probably fight 6 to 4 at the worst, whereas to-day was 5 to 4. *Blücher* is a heavy loss to the German cruiser fleet—she was only five years old.

I am very grateful to you for not pressing me about Jellicoe.

Late that night came his answer back :—

Mr. Asquith to Mr. Churchill.

Sunday.

I think this news very good and congratulate you heartily.

* * * *

Proposal to Base the Grand Fleet on the Forth.

The result of the engagement confirmed and fortified my own convictions of the great strength of the British line of battle, and in particular of the ships armed with the 13·5-inch guns. But while the strength of the Fleet was proved to be satisfactory, its strategic station was also proved to be too remote. But for the fact that the battle-cruisers had been held at the Forth against the wishes of the Commander-in-Chief, the Germans would have raided the British coasts with impunity. Nothing but Tyrwhitt and his light cruisers and flotillas could have caught them, and these would have been easily repulsed and seriously handled in a daylight action by the forces which the Germans sent to sea.

At the moment of contact with the enemy the Grand Fleet was nearly 150 miles to the northward. It was completely out of relation and could not, unless the fight moved towards it, have come into action that day. The only support which was available for Admiral Beatty was the Third Battle Squadron. Had the German High Sea Fleet been at sea to sustain its fast forces, we should have been powerless to strike, if not indeed in serious danger of being struck. I therefore, as soon as we could appreciate the results of the battle, addressed the following letter to the Commander-in-Chief :—

My Letter to Sir John Jellicoe of January 26.

Mr. Churchill to Sir John Jellicoe.

January 26, 1915.

I wish you to consider moving your base from Scapa Flow to the Firth of Forth. The Firth of Forth is specified

in your War Orders as your principal fuelling base. It is a strongly defended port. It has many facilities which are lacking at Scapa. The inner line of anti-submarine defences has been completed and is thoroughly satisfactory; the outer line is almost completed; and the Oxcars, Inch Mickery, and Inch Colm islets are defended with guns and lights. There is therefore ample room for your whole fleet. In order to get full security, we require a greater concentration of our resources. If you came South and joined all your trawlers and defensive flotillas to those already at the Forth it would be possible to keep an area at least 40 miles from May Island absolutely swept and secured.

Admiral Lowry has shown himself to be a thoroughly competent officer; and with the large numbers of protective and scouting vessels which would then be available, as well as a large supply of sea-planes, your exits and entrances could be made safer than at Scapa. Scapa should, of course, be kept up on a reduced scale, occupied by the 10th Battle Squadron,[1] and watched by a few destroyers and trawlers from Cromarty. Cromarty would remain as at present. We would endeavour to bring the Medway floating dock to Rosyth, and gather a regular repairing staff there. This would help you in refits.

You would then have under your hand three flotillas of the First Fleet, comprising 63 seagoing destroyers; your present 29 and "Oak," less 8; Admiral Lowry's 7 destroyers and 12 ex-coastals —a total of 103 destroyers. You would have your own 84 trawlers and mine-sweepers, 8 yachts, and 8 motor boats added to Admiral Lowry's 61 trawlers and minesweepers, 7 yachts, and 13 motor boats; and we could concentrate at least 30 mine-sweeping trawlers from Charlton's general force, to make a total, if necessary, of over 200 organized small craft to watch, picket, and sweep the approaches. Besides this, there are Lowry's 8 submarines. I could put 20 seaplanes at your disposal. In fact, it seems to me certain that you could be made as safe and comfortable at the Forth as the Germans are in the Elbe, while the sweeping outwards for mines and picketing against submarines and minelayers would be far more thoroughly carried out in this limited area than at present. It would also be easy to devise a system of defensive minefields which would keep the enemy at a distance, but through which we could easily pass.

The strategic advantages are too obvious to require enlarging upon. You would have your four battle squadrons united. It has now been decided to strengthen greatly the minefield north of the Straits of Dover so as to close that channel effectively to heavy ships. When this is done, the 5th Battle Squadron (two "Lord Nelsons" and six "Formidables") will be moved to the Humber, and join the 1st Cruiser Squadron and patrol flotillas there. The Harwich Striking Force, although seriously weakened by the withdrawal of the First Flotilla, will comprise five "Arethusas," and all the "L" and the "M" class destroyers, together with the overseas submarines.

With both these forces, you would be in close relation and would be able to give a greater personal direction to the operations than is possible while you remain at such a distance from the scene of action.

All this is of course in the future; but if the change could be made in the next month or six weeks, it seems to me that on every ground great advantages would be secured. Your fleet would be not less safe and more efficient, and the strategic situation, whether for the attack of the enemy or for the defence of this country, would be vastly improved.

I send you a copy of a project[1] which we are considering here for the reorganization of the battle and light cruisers which will greatly strengthen the force at your disposal. It embodies the principle of scouting groups, any two of which are capable of meeting the whole fast forces of the enemy.

I have never said or thought that you are too lavish with your refits; though I think that sometimes during critical periods it is well to suspend them. Also I hope that for the present the ships will stay as much as possible in harbour so as to reduce wear and tear to a minimum.

[1] The dummy battleships.

[1] The Battle-Cruiser Fleet.

The action on Sunday bears out all I have thought of the relative British and German strength. It is clear that at five to four they have no thought but flight, and that a battle fought out on this margin could have only one ending. The immense power of the 13·5-inch gun is clearly decisive on the minds of the enemy as well as on the progress of the action. I should not feel the slightest anxiety at the idea of your engaging with equality. Still I think it would be bad management on our part if your superiority was not much nearer six to four than five to four, even under the worst conditions.

Effects of the Victory at Home and Abroad.

One cannot now dispute the advantages of moving the Grand Fleet to the Forth. It would have taken four or five months to prepare the new base and its defences in a satisfactory way. My representations were, however, unsuccessful, and after correspondence which extended over six weeks I found myself compelled to minute on March 3 :—

The Commander-in-Chief's view must prevail, and in consequence I consider that the land defences of Scapa should immediately be begun on an emergency, but semi-permanent, scale.[1] A regular system of guns and lights on shore should be devised. Store houses, jetties and other conveniences should be taken in hand, and provision made for the comfort and recreation of the Fleet. I should be glad if the Third Sea Lord would call a small Committee to report on the subject and propose all the necessary measures. Buildings should be rented and converted as far as possible, and any new structures erected should be of the kind that can be put up most quickly. But it is clear the Fleet will have to stay there for a long time to come and should make themselves comfortable and safe.

W. S. C.

[1] Up to this date all the defences were floating.

It was not until 1917, after Admiral Beatty had become Commander-in-Chief, that the Grand Fleet was based on the Firth of Forth.

* * * *

The victory of the Dogger Bank brought for the time being abruptly to an end the adverse movement against my administration of the Admiralty, which had begun to gather. Congratulations flowed in from every side, and we enjoyed once again an adequate measure of prestige. The sinking of the *Blücher* and the flight, after heavy injuries, of the other German ships was accepted as a solid and indisputable result. The German Emperor was confirmed in the gloomy impressions he had sustained after the action of August 28, 1914. All enterprise in the German Admiralty was again effectually quelled, and apart from submarine warfare a period of nearly fifteen months halcyon calm reigned over the North Sea and throughout Home Waters. The neutral world accepted the event as a decisive proof of British supremacy at sea : and even at home the Admiralty felt the benefit in a sensible increase of confidence and goodwill.

CHAPTER XXXVIII

SECOND THOUGHTS AND FINAL DECISION

Progress of the Dardanelles Plan—Change in Lord Fisher's View—Minute from First Lord to Lord Fisher—Lord Fisher's Memorandum of January 25, 1915—The Russian Reply about the Dardanelles—My Memorandum of January 27—Increasing Strength of the Grand Fleet—Functions of the Navy—Interview with the Prime Minister—The War Council of January 28—Lord Fisher's Behaviour—His Final Consent—The Passive Hypothesis.

UP to about January 20 there seemed to be unanimous agreement in favour of the naval enterprise against the Dardanelles. War Office, Foreign Office, Admiralty seemed by their representatives to be equally in earnest.

Progress of the Dardanelles Plan.

The War Council had taken its decision. It is true it was not a final or irrevocable decision. It authorized and encouraged the Admiralty to survey their resources and develop their plans. If these plans broke down in preparation, it would be quite easy for us to report the fact to the War Council and go no farther. But the staff work continued to progress smoothly, and all the Admirals concerned appeared in complete accord. It was not until the end of January, when negotiations with the French and Russian Governments were far advanced, when many preparations had been made, when many orders had been given and when many ships were moving with his full authority, that Lord Fisher began to manifest an increasing dislike and opposition to the scheme.

Meanwhile the possibilities of a British naval offensive or of amphibious action in northern waters were becoming continually more remote. Correspondence with Sir John Jellicoe showed the Commander-in-Chief averse from anything in the nature of an attack upon Borkum or an attempt to enter the Baltic. To strengthen our naval forces by every conceivable means, to add every new vessel to the Grand Fleet and to remain in an attitude of inactive expectancy was the sum and substance of the naval policy advocated from this quarter. At the same time the opposition of General Joffre to Sir John French's plans for an advance in force along the Belgian coast brought that project also to an end. It was clear that no serious naval offensive would take place in the northern theatre for an indefinite period, and that any plans which might gradually be perfected for such an offensive would derive no encouragement from the Commander-in-Chief of the Grand Fleet.

All this made me only the more anxious to act in the Mediterranean. That seemed to be the direction reserved for our surplus ships and ammunition, by the failure or postponement of other alternatives. It was the only direction in which we had a practical plan, properly worked out by the staff, and supported by a powerful consensus of naval and political opinion.

Change in Lord Fisher's View.

As soon, however, as the Commander-in-Chief realized that the *Queen Elizabeth*, a battle-cruiser, and other powerful ships were to be assigned to the Mediterranean theatre, he began to dwell again upon the weakness of his fleet and the insufficiency of his margins. And now for the first time he found a ready listener in the First Sea Lord.

Lord Fisher's sudden dislike of the Dardanelles project seemed to arise at this time largely and even primarily from his reluctance to undertake the bombardment and blocking in of Zeebrugge. This operation appeared all the more necessary now that the Army had abandoned their intention of an advance along the Belgian coast. It was strongly urged by the War Council,

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

THE TOWN OF CHANAK.

Chanak is the principal town on the Asiatic shore of the Dardanelles. It stands at the narrowest point of the Straits and was unsuccessfully attacked by the ships of the Allied Fleets in March, 1915. Chanak has a population of some thirteen thousand.

by the Admiralty Staff and especially by Sir Arthur Wilson. "If we do not block the Zeebrugge canal," Sir Arthur had written on January 4, "I think we shall inevitably lose more ships and also many transports. If we had done it last time we bombarded, we should not have lost *Formidable*. We cannot keep ships entirely locked up in harbour without deterioration. So far very few of our losses have been incurred while the ships have been employed in any active operations."

I was in cordial agreement with this doctrine. Ultimately, as everyone knows, the blocking of Zeebrugge had to be carried out under circumstances of infinitely greater difficulty and after we had suffered grievous injury. The First Sea Lord, finding himself entirely alone on the question, became very much disturbed. His dislike of the Zeebrugge operation was extended not only to the Dardanelles plan, but to all plans of naval attack on hostile coasts which were not combined with large land forces, and ultimately he expressed opinions which seemed opposed to any form of naval intervention in any quarter. This was a great change, at variance both with his earlier and later attitudes, and I was concerned to observe it.

Lord Fisher's arguments did not take the form of criticizing the details of either operations in question. He did not, for instance, deal with the gunnery aspects of the Dardanelles, or with any purely technical aspect, in regard to which any valid argument would have had to be met, or the plan abandoned. It was

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

A FAMOUS BATTLESHIP.

The *Queen Elizabeth*, one of the most celebrated of British fighting ships, was built at Portsmouth and joined the active list on December 22, 1914. She was the first warship to carry 15-inch guns, of which she has eight. In addition to these great pieces of ordnance the *Queen Elizabeth* mounts twelve 6-inch and four 3-inch guns and has five submerged torpedo tubes. She was the flagship of Vice-Admirals Carden and de Robeck at the Dardanelles, and later was fleet flagship of the Grand Fleet. It was in the after-cabin of the *Queen Elizabeth* that Rear-Admiral von Reuter made the final act of submission of the German Fleet.

about the safety of the Grand Fleet and its margin of superiority that he now professed to be seriously perturbed. This was a subject with which I was extremely familiar. Had we not been two months before over the whole ground together in the discussions of November with the Commander-in-Chief? There was no real substance in the apprehensions with which I was now confronted. An important fact however lay behind them. Lord Fisher had on reflection, on second thoughts, on some prompting or other, turned against the operation which he had hitherto willingly supported. Nevertheless matters had moved forward to a point where mere vague misgivings could not be allowed to paralyse action. Good reasoning or new facts were required.

Minute from First Lord to Lord Fisher.

On January 20 in response to the First Sea Lord's real or affected misgivings I sent him a minute, observing :—

You seem to have altered your views, since taking office, about the relative strengths of the British and German Grand and High Sea Fleets. In November you advised the removal of *Princess Royal*, *Inflexible*, and *Invincible*, together with 8 " King Edwards " and 5 " Duncans," a total of 16 capital ships, from the Grand Fleet, some for temporary duties of importance, but the battleships for permanent service in the south. The dispositions were carried out. Since then the Commander-in-Chief has received back the 8 " King Edwards " and the *Princess Royal*; he has gained the *Indomitable*; he has

received the *Warrior, Duke of Edinburgh, Black Prince, Gloucester, Yarmouth, Caroline, Galatea, Donegal,* and *Leviathan,* together with 16 destroyers additional, and, I think, about 50 extra trawlers and yachts. These are immense additions to his strength, and I know of no new circumstances which have arisen or of reinforcements which have reached the enemy which ought to make us anxious now if we were not anxious before these great additions reached Sir John Jellicoe.

Lord Fisher did not dispute this general argument; but he returned to the charge on the question of destroyers, admittedly our weakest point, and demanded the return of a whole flotilla from the Dardanelles. I could not agree to this, as of course it would have paralysed the Dardanelles Fleet and destroyed the plans which the staff were maturing. At the same time Sir Arthur Wilson continued to press for action against Zeebrugge.

Lord Fisher's Memorandum of January 25, 1915.

This double pressure brought matters to a head.

January 25, 1915.

First Lord.

I have no desire to continue a useless resistance in the War Council to plans I cannot concur in, but I would ask that the enclosed may be printed and circulated to its members before the next meeting.

Photo: E. N. A.

THE 15-INCH GUNS OF THE *QUEEN ELIZABETH.*

This photograph, showing a church parade being conducted under the shadow of the *Queen Elizabeth's* great guns, conveys some idea of their size. The 15-inch guns mounted on the ship could hurl a shell weighing nearly a ton to a distance of over fifteen miles. They were employed with devastating effect against Turkish fortifications and trench lines at Gallipoli.

The Memorandum has an argument for adherence to the Fleet's "policy of steady pressure" and for remaining passive except for efforts to force a general action. The following paragraphs may be quoted :—

Of all strategical attitudes that of a naval defensive as adopted by Germany is the most difficult to meet and the most deeply fraught with danger for the opposing belligerent, if he is weak ashore as we are, and his enemy strong ashore as Germany is. Nevertheless, all through our history we have had to encounter similar situations. The policy of the French in nearly all our naval wars was the policy which Germany has now adopted. Our reply to-day must be the same as our reply was then, namely, to be content to remain in possession of our command of the sea, husbanding our strength until the gradual pressure of sea power compels the enemy's fleet to make an effort to attack us at a disadvantage.

In the Seven Years' War the French preserved their fleet from a decision for five years. Nelson was off Toulon for two years. By comparison, the six months during which Sir John Jellicoe has had to wait are short, and they have been relieved by incidents which have considerably diminished the enemy's forces.

The pressure of sea power to-day is probably not less but greater and more rapid in action than in the past; but it is still a slow process and requires great patience. In time it will almost certainly compel the enemy to seek a decision at sea, particularly when he begins to realize that his offensive on land is broken. This is one reason for husbanding our resources. Another reason is that the prolongation of war at sea tends to raise up fresh enemies for the dominant naval power in a much higher degree than it does on land owing to the exasperation of neutrals. This tendency will only be checked by the conviction of an overwhelming naval supremacy behind the nation exercising sea power.

We play into Germany's hands if we risk fighting ships in any subsidiary operations such as coastal bombardments or the attack of fortified places without military co-operation, for we thereby increase the possibility that the Germans may be able to engage our fleet with some approach to equality of strength. The sole justification of coastal bombardments and attacks by the fleet on fortified places, such as the contemplated prolonged bombardment of the Dardanelles Forts by our fleet, is to force a decision at sea, and so far and no farther can they be justified.

So long as the German High Sea Fleet preserves its present great strength and splendid gunnery efficiency, so long is it imperative and indeed vital that no operation whatever should be undertaken by the British Fleet, calculated to impair its present superiority. . . . Even the older ships should not be risked, for they cannot be lost without losing men, and they form our only reserve behind the Grand Fleet.

Ours is the supreme necessity and difficulty of remaining passive except in so far as we can force the enemy to abandon his defensive and to expose his fleet to a general action. . . .

It has been said that the first function of the British Army is to assist the fleet in obtaining command of the sea. This might be accomplished by military co-operation with the Navy in such operations as the attack of Zeebrugge or the forcing of the Dardanelles, which might bring out the German and Turkish fleets respectively. Apparently, however, this is not to be. The English Army is apparently to continue to provide a small sector of the allied front in France, where it no more helps the Navy than if it were at Timbuctoo.

Being already in possession of all that a powerful fleet can give a country we should continue quietly to enjoy the advantage without dissipating our strength in operations that cannot improve the position.

FISHER.

This paper was not, I think, except for the last few characteristic sentences, Lord Fisher's own composition. It had been prepared in accordance with his directions. It was, of course, absolutely counter to all my convictions. No one, certainly, wished to "dissipate our

strength in operations that cannot improve the position." To write thus was to beg the question. But the naval policy emerging from its last sentence would have condemned us to complete inactivity. It was no doubt the policy pursued by the Commander-in-Chief and the Admiralty after I quitted office. It was the policy which led directly to the supreme submarine peril in 1917.

* * * *

The Russian Reply about the Dardanelles.

Meanwhile on the 26th arrived the Russian reply to my telegram informing the Grand Duke of the Dardanelles plans. It was of course favourable but not helpful. Sir Edward Grey forwarded it to me, with the following remarks :—

"This is the Russian reply about Dardanelles. It shows that, though Russia cannot help, the operation has her entire goodwill, and the Grand Duke attaches the greatest importance to its success.

"This fact may be used with Augagneur[1] to show that we must go ahead with it and that failure to do so will disappoint Russia and react most unfavourably upon the military situation, about which France and we are specially concerned just now." . . .

My Memorandum of January 27.

I now addressed myself to the First Sea Lord's paper which I forwarded to the Prime Minister with the following reply, of which I sent Lord Fisher a copy.

MEMORANDUM BY THE FIRST LORD.

January 27, 1915.

The main principle of the First Sea Lord's paper is indisputable. The foundation of our naval policy is the maintenance in a secure position of a Battle Fleet with all ancillary vessels capable at any time of defeating the German High Sea Fleet in battle, and reserved for that purpose above and before all other duties. This principle has been and will be fully and strictly observed.

The ships engaged in Sunday's action [the Dogger Bank] on both sides represented very fairly, so far as individual quality is concerned, the classes of vessels which would be opposed in a general fleet action. The event proved that a superiority of 5 to 4 in our favour is decisive. On these terms the German ships thought of nothing but retreat, and the British of attack. Very heavy loss was inflicted upon the Germans: one ship was sunk out of four, and 2 other ships most severely damaged. Had the action been fought out, the destruction of the others was certain.

We are now no longer in the region of mere speculation. The relative qualities of seamanship and gunnery of the two sides have been put to the test and reveal no inferiority on our part, while the superiority of the 13·5-inch gun and the effect of heavier metal generally has now been shown. There is therefore every reason to believe that the best 21 British battleships and battle-cruisers could defeat decisively at even numbers the 21 German Dreadnoughts. Any British ships additional to this number must be regarded as an insurance against unexpected losses by mine and torpedo.

On the declaration of war the maximum numbers available in Home Waters on both sides were: Great Britain, 24+2 "Lord Nelsons"; Germany, 21. Since then the following capital units have joined the Fleet: *Queen Elizabeth, Erin, Agincourt, Benbow, Emperor of India, Tiger,* [1] *Indomitable*; and the following will join during the next month: *Inflexible, Invincible,* and perhaps *Australia*; against which we have lost *Audacious*. In addition to these the Grand Fleet and Harwich Striking Force have been strengthened by eighteen cruisers and thirty-six destroyers.[1]

Meanwhile the German Fleet in Home Waters has received no new accession of strength and has suffered the following losses in modern ships: *Blücher, Magdeburg, Köln, Mainz,* and 10 or 12 Destroyers.

Increasing Strength of the Grand Fleet.

It should be recognized that the progressive improvement in types has been so marked that ships over 12 years old can only play a secondary part in the war. Their speed would probably

[1] The French Minister of Marine.

[1] Names omitted.

THE VILLAGE

An important point in the Narrows on the peninsula shore of the Bahr. During the Great War the place was used by

prevent them from participating in the main action, except against each other, and would expose them to almost certain destruction if overtaken by the latest types. However, in this pre-Dreadnought class we have also an immense superiority. The 8 "King Edwards" are already a part of the Grand Fleet, and it can be strengthened at any time by the addition of the 2 "Lord Nelsons"[1] and the 6 remaining "Formidables." This fleet would easily and certainly destroy the whole of the German pre-Dreadnought battle fleet.

During the course of the present year 8 battleships, 5 of over 26-knots speed and the whole armed with 15-inch guns, constituting a squadron probably capable of fighting by itself the two best squadrons of the German Navy, will be available for reinforcement or replacement of casualties. Since the war commenced 8 light cruisers have already been commissioned for service in Home Waters; 8 more will be delivered in the next three months, and 4 more in the three months after that. All these cruisers are superior in speed and gun power to any of the German light cruisers afloat. There will also be available during the year 56 destroyers, between 50 and 75 submarines, 24 small gunboats for subsidiary duties, together with other miscellaneous auxiliary vessels. It is therefore certain that the strength of the Grand Fleet, which was originally sufficient, has now been greatly augmented and will continually increase. The first principle laid down by the First Sea Lord is thus most fully met.

[1] The two Lord Nelsons (i.e. *Lord Nelson* and *Agamemnon*) had not yet been added by Lord Fisher to the Dardanelles Fleet.

Functions of the Navy.

The second vital function of the Navy is the protection of trade and the control of sea communications. All German cruisers and gunboats abroad have been sunk, blocked in, or interned, with the exception of the *Karlsruhe* and *Dresden*, which are hiding. There are great doubts as to the efficiency of the *Karlsruhe*, of whom nothing has been heard for nearly three months. There are believed to be 2 German armed merchantmen at large

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

OF MAIDOS.

Dardanelles, Maidos is situated about three miles north of Kilid
he Turks as a link in their line of communications.

(the *Kronprinz Wilhelm* and *Prinz Eitel Friedrich*). All the rest of the 42 prepared for arming and which it has been intended to let loose on the trade routes have been blockaded, interned, sunk, or captured. . . .

Meanwhile the other functions of the Navy, viz. the control of the English Channel and its approaches, the patrol of the Straits of Dover, the patrol flotillas of the East Coast, and the special Harwich Striking Force, are all provided for.

Over and above all the foregoing, and after meeting all purely naval claims, we have available the following battleships completely manned and supplied with their own ammunition and its reserve :

5 " Duncans."
6 " Canopus."
9 " Majestics."
1 " Royal Sovereign."

Between the beginning of April and the end of July we shall also receive 14 heavily armoured, shallow-draft Monitors ; 2 armed with two 15-inch guns, 4 armed with two 14-inch guns, and 8 armed with two 12-inch guns. These last 8 will be armed by taking the turrets out of 4 of the " Majestics." It is this force which it is proposed to use for special services and for bombarding as may be necessary from time to time in furtherance of objects of great strategic and political importance, among which the following may be specifically mentioned :—

1. The operations at the Dardanelles ;
2. The support of the left flank of the Army ;
3. The bombardment of Zeebrugge ; and later on
4. The seizure of Borkum.

It is believed that with care and skill losses may be reduced to a minimum and certainly kept within limits fully justified by the importance and necessity of the operations. It cannot be said that this employment of ships which are (except the " Duncans ") not needed and not suited to fight in the line of battle, conflicts with any of the sound principles of naval policy set forth by the First Sea Lord. Not to use them where necessary because of some fear that there will be an outcry if a ship is

lost would be wrong, and, if certain proportion of loss of life among officers and men of the Royal Navy serving on these ships can achieve important objects of the war and save a very much greater loss of life among our comrades and allies on shore, we ought certainly not to shrink from it.

W. S. C.

Interview with the Prime Minister.

The First Sea Lord could not in his heart feel at all anxious about the Grand Fleet margin. He knew that I knew his real convictions about it. He did not attempt to continue the discussion on a false basis: but he expressed an intention of not attending the War Council which was fixed for the next day—the 28th. This was, of course, impossible. I insisted that he should be present, and arranged for a private meeting for both of us with the Prime Minister before the Council. To this Lord Fisher consented.

We repaired accordingly to Mr. Asquith's room twenty minutes before the War Council was to meet. No written record of this discussion has been preserved, but there is no dispute about it. "Save in respect of some points of slight importance as regards the precise language used," say the Dardanelles Commissioners, "the accounts given us by Mr. Asquith and Lord Fisher, as regards what occurred at this private meeting, tally." Lord Fisher indicated very briefly his objections to both the Zeebrugge and Dardanelles schemes, and indicated his preference for a great operation in the Baltic or for a general advance of the Army along the Belgian coast with strong naval support. Lord Fisher, say the Dardanelles Commissioners, "did not criticize the attack on the Gallipoli peninsula on its own merits. Neither did he mention to the Prime Minister that he had any thought of resigning if his opinions were overruled." This is quite true. I contended that both Zeebrugge and the Dardanelles scheme should be undertaken, but that if either were to be dropped it should be Zeebrugge, to which the First Sea Lord seemed more particularly opposed. The Prime Minister, after hearing both sides, expressed his concurrence with my

Photo: E. N. A.

TURKISH TRANSPORT CAMELS IN GALLIPOLI.

The camel is not a particularly tractable beast, but as a transport animal it had few equals and no superiors during the operations against the Turks. Camels were not used by the British on Gallipoli, but were employed in large numbers in Sinai and Palestine. They gave wonderful service, were indifferent to shell fire and, owing to their noiseless movements, were of particular value in night operations.

views, and decided that Zeebrugge should be dropped but that the Dardanelles should go forward. Lord Fisher seemed on the whole content, and I went downstairs with him under the impression that all was well.

The War Council of January 28.

The Council was already waiting. Colonel Hankey's record of the discussion which followed has already been made public in the Report of the Dardanelles Commission.

"Mr. Churchill said that he had communicated to the Grand Duke Nicholas and to the French Admiralty the project for a naval attack on the Dardanelles. The Grand Duke had replied with enthusiasm, and believed that this [attack] might assist him. The French Admiralty had also sent a favourable reply, and had promised co-operation. Preparations were in hand for commencing about the middle of February. He asked if the War Council attached importance to this operation, which undoubtedly involved some risks ?

"Lord Fisher said that he understood that this question would not be raised to-day. The Prime Minister was well aware of his own views in regard to it.

Photo : Copyright.

AT THE COOKHOUSE ON GALLIPOLI.

Turkish orderlies drawing dinners for their companies. The Turkish soldier, in addition to his fighting qualities, possesses one other great military virtue in being able to march and exist upon very little food. On more than one occasion during the Great War he was required to perform feats which called for more than ordinary endurance in circumstances which meant marching light with but little to eat. Rarely did he fail. One such instance was the desert march across Sinai in the summer heat of 1916 against the British position at Romani, a weary march of many days, a pitched battle and a return journey after defeat.

"The Prime Minister said that, in view of the steps which had already been taken, the question could not well be left in abeyance.

"Lord Kitchener considered the naval attack to be vitally important. If successful, its effect would be equivalent to that of a successful campaign fought with the new armies. One merit of the scheme was that, if satisfactory progress was not made, the attack could be broken off.

"Mr. Balfour pointed out that a successful attack on the Dardanelles would achieve the following results :—

Photo : Imperial War Museum.

A DANGEROUS CARGO.

The men employed on mine-laying vessels during the war followed a dangerous calling. As may be imagined, the job of handling mines of heavy weight each packed with high explosive is one demanding both skill and care. Actually the risk of accident is diminished by packing the mines with wet gun-cotton, as this agent is not so easily detonated as are some high explosives. The mines are sown by means of rails down which they are rolled and projected into the sea clear of the rudder and propellers.

and causing great embarrassment;

"It would also open a passage to the Danube;

"It was difficult to imagine a more helpful operation.

"Sir Edward Grey said it would also finally settle the attitude of Bulgaria and the whole of the Balkans.

"Mr. Churchill said that the naval Commander-in-Chief in the Mediterranean had expressed his belief that it could be done. He required from three weeks to a month to accomplish it. The necessary ships were already on their way to the Dardanelles. In reply to Mr. Balfour, he said that, in response to his inquiries, the French had expressed their confidence that Austrian submarines would not get as far as the Dardanelles.

"Lord Haldane asked if the Turks had any submarines.

"Mr. Churchill said that, so far as could be ascertained, they had not. He did not anticipate that we should sustain much loss in the actual bombardment,

"It would cut the Turkish Army in two;

"It would put Constantinople under our control;

"It would give us the advantage of having the Russian wheat, and enable Russia to resume exports;

"This would restore the Russian exchanges, which were falling owing to her inability to export,

but in sweeping for mines some losses must be expected. The real difficulties would begin after the outer forts had been silenced, and it became necessary to attack the Narrows. He explained the plan of attack on a map."

Lord Fisher's Behaviour.

This record does not, however, complete the story. During the Council an incident occurred which has subsequently obtained much publicity. Here is Lord Fisher's own account[1]:—

9th Meeting of War Council, January 28, 1915, 11.30 a.m.

(*Note.*—Before this meeting the Prime Minister discussed with Mr. Churchill and Lord Fisher the proposed Dardanelles operations and decided in favour of considering the project in opposition to Lord Fisher's opinion.)

[1] *Memories*, by Lord Fisher, p. 80.

THE DARDANELLES.

Mr. Churchill asked if the War Council attached importance to the proposed Dardanelles operations, which undoubtedly involved risks.

Lord Fisher said that he had understood that this question was not to be raised at this meeting. The Prime Minister knew his (Lord Fisher's) views on the subject.

The Prime Minister said that, in view of what had already been done, the question could not be left in abeyance.

(*Note.*—Thereupon Lord Fisher left the Council table. He was followed by Lord Kitchener, who asked him what he intended to do. Lord Fisher replied to Lord Kitchener that he would not return to the Council table, and would resign his office as First Sea Lord. Lord Kitchener then pointed out to Lord Fisher that he (Lord Fisher) was the

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

IN A MINE STORE.

Here stacked in rows like so many Dutch cheeses are sufficient engines of death to destroy an armada. These mines are of the buoyant type which are anchored to the sea bottom, the mine itself riding about twelve feet beneath the surface. Each mine is packed with about 100 lbs. of wet gun-cotton.

only dissentient, and that the Dardanelles operations had been decided upon by the Prime Minister; and he urged on Lord Fisher that his duty to his country was to go on carrying out the duties of First Sea Lord. After further talk Lord Fisher reluctantly gave in to Lord Kitchener and went back to the Council table.)

It must be emphasized here as well as in regard to Lord Kitchener's statement to the War Council dated May 14, 1915, that Lord Fisher considered that it would be both improper and unseemly for him to enter into an altercation either at the War Council or elsewhere with his chief Mr. Churchill, the First Lord. Silence or resignation was the right course.

His Final Consent.

After the meeting was over, we adjourned for several hours. Although the War Council had come to a decision with which I heartily agreed, and no voice had been raised against the naval plan, I thought I must come to a clear understanding with the First Sea Lord. I had noticed the incident of his leaving the table and Lord Kitchener following him to the window and arguing with him, and I did not know what was the upshot in his mind. After luncheon I asked him to come and see me in my room and we had a long talk. I strongly urged him not to turn back from the Dardanelles operation; and in the end, after a long and very friendly discussion which covered the whole Admiralty and naval position, he definitely consented to undertake it.

There never has been any dispute between us subsequently as to this. "When I finally decided to go in," said Lord Fisher to the Dardanelles Commissioners, "I went the whole hog, *totus porcus*." We then repaired to the afternoon War Council Meeting, Admiral Oliver, Chief of the Staff, coming with us, and I announced on behalf of the Admiralty, and with the agreement of Lord Fisher, that we had decided to undertake the task with which the War Council had charged us so urgently. This I took as the point of final decision. After it, I never looked back. We had left the region of discussion and consultation, of balancing and misgivings. The matter had passed into the domain of action.

I am in no way concealing the great and continuous pressure which I put upon the old Admiral. This pressure was reinforced by Lord Kitchener's personal influence, by the collective opinion of the War Council, and by the authoritative decision of the Prime Minister. It was a pressure not only of opinion, which was overwhelming, but of arguments to which he could find no answer. Moreover, there was in addition on the technical side a very great weight of support at the Admiralty. "Naval opinion was unanimous," said Lord Fisher afterwards; "Mr. Churchill had them all on his side. I was the only rebel."

Was it wrong to put this pressure upon the First Sea Lord? I cannot think so. War is a business of terrible pressures, and persons who take part in it must fail if they are not strong enough to withstand them. As a mere politician and civilian, I would never have agreed to the Dardanelles project if I had not believed in it. I would have done my utmost to break it down in argument and to marshal opinion against it. Had I been in Lord Fisher's position and held his views, I would have refused point-blank. There was no need for him to resign. Only the First Sea Lord can order the ships to steam and the guns to fire. First Sea Lords have to stand up to facts and take their decisions resolutely at the moment of choice. To go back on a decision after an enterprise has been launched, risks run and sacrifices made, is quite a different matter. During the period of choice, a man must fight for his opinion with the utmost tenacity. But once the choice has been made, then the business must be carried through in loyal comradeship.

* * * *

The Passive Hypothesis.

I have asked myself in these later years, What would have happened if I had taken Lord Fisher's advice and refused point-blank to take any action at the Dardanelles unless or until the

Photo: E.N.A.

TURKISH GUNNERS AT PRACTICE.

The Turkish Navy was a factor of relatively little account during the Great War. The British Naval Mission under Admiral Limpus was withdrawn early in the war, and thereafter, such ships as the Turks possessed being penned up within the Sea of Marmora, little was accomplished by this force. Under the Treaty of Sèvres the Turkish Navy was abolished altogether.

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

MUDROS BAY.

A familiar sight to all those who fought at the Dardanelles; the almost entirely land-locked bay of Mudros with its boom at the entrance provided a secure anchorage for the Allied Fleets and transports. In addition, the island itself speedily assumed the appearance of an army base complete with hospitals and piles of stores of every kind.

War Office produced on their responsibility an adequate army to storm the Gallipoli Peninsula? Should we by holding out in this way have secured a sufficient army and a good plan? Should we have had all the advantages of the Dardanelles policy without the mistakes and misfortunes for which we had to pay so dearly?

The Dardanelles Commissioners, studying the story from an entirely different angle, obviously felt that if there had been no naval plan in the field, there would later on have been a really well-conceived and well-concerted amphibious attack. No one can probe this imaginary situation very far, and it is impossible to pronounce. But I think myself that nothing less than the ocular demonstration and practical proof of the strategic meaning of the Dardanelles, and the effects of attacking it on every Balkan and Mediterranean Power, would have lighted up men's minds sufficiently to make a large abstraction of troops from the main theatre a possibility.

I do not believe that anything less than those tremendous hopes, reinforced as they were by dire necessity, would have enabled Lord Kitchener to wrest an army from France and Flanders. In cold blood, it could never have been done. General Headquarters, and the French General Staff would have succeeded in shattering any plan put forward so long as it was a mere theoretical proposal for a large diversion of force to the southern theatre.

At one moment they would have told us that, owing to the Russian failure, great masses of Germans were returning to the west to deliver an overwhelming offensive: at another that they could not spare a round of ammunition and were in desperate straits for the want of it: at a third, that they had a wonderful plan for a great offensive which would shatter the German line and drive them out of a large portion of France.

All these arguments were in fact used, and their effect was, as will be seen, to cripple the Dardanelles operations even after they had actually begun. How much more would they have overwhelmed any paper plan for an eastern campaign. There would have been no Dardanelles with its hopes, its glories, its losses and its ultimate heart-breaking failure.

But who shall say what would have happened instead? A few weeks' more delay in the entry of Italy into the war, and the continuance of the great Russian defeats in Galicia, would have rendered that entry improbable in the extreme. A few more months' acceleration of the Bulgarian declaration of war against us, and the whole of the Balkans, except Serbia, might have been rallied to the Teutonic standards. The flower of the Turkish Army, which was largely destroyed on the Gallipoli Peninsula, would certainly have fought us or our Allies somewhere else. The destruction of the Russian Army of the Caucasus could not have been long averted.

I do not believe that by adopting the negative attitude we should ever have got our good and well-conceived amphibious operation. We should have got no operation at all. We should have done nothing, and have been confronted with diplomatic and military reactions wholly unfavourable throughout the southern and eastern theatre. Searching my heart, I cannot regret the effort. It was good to go as far as we did.

Not to persevere—that was the crime.

CHAPTER XXXIX

THE GENESIS OF THE MILITARY ATTACK

An Army After All—Lord Kitchener in the Toils—Paralysis of the General Staff—East or West—Lord Kitchener's Many Burdens—His Courage and Kindness—The 29th Division—Naval Preparations—Quasi-political Factors—Decisions of February 16—Conflicting Pressures upon Lord Kitchener—The Day of Recoil—Councils of February 24 and 26—My Memorandum of February 25—And of February 27—Final Release of the 29th Division—Comments of the Dardanelles Commissioners.

UP to this point in the story of the Dardanelles the War Council and the Admiralty had accepted unquestioningly the basis that no troops were available for offensive operations against Turkey.

An Army After All.

In his first letter to me of January 2, Lord Kitchener had said: "We have no troops to land anywhere. . . . We shall not be ready for anything big for some months." The first telegram to Admiral Carden of January 3 had asked: "Are you of opinion that it is practicable to force the Dardanelles *using ships alone?*" At the evening meeting of the War Council on January 28 when the final decision was taken, Lord Kitchener repeated: "We have at present no troops to spare." It was on that foundation alone that all our decisions in favour of a purely naval attack had been taken. But henceforward a series of new facts and pressures came into play which gradually but unceasingly changed the character and enormously extended the scale of the enterprise. Under these influences in less than two months the naval attack, with its lack of certainty but with its limited costs and risks, became subsidiary, and in its place there arose a military development of great magnitude. Over this new plan the Admiralty had no responsible control. Our advice did not prevail; our criticisms were not welcomed; and even inquiries became a matter of delicacy and tact. Nevertheless, by the results of this military operation we had to stand or fall.

After all there was an Army. From the very moment when the purely naval attack had been finally resolved troops from many quarters began to come into view. From that moment the pressure to employ troops in one way or another grew steadily in every mind.

The decision to abandon or postpone indefinitely an advance along the Belgian coast liberated portions of the reinforcements destined for Sir John French. The feeble character of the Turkish attack on Egypt and its repulse liberated the greater part of the army concentrated there. The continued improvement in the training of the Australian and Territorial troops in this army increasingly fitted them for offensive operations. The suppression of the rebellion in South Africa had removed other anxieties. Meanwhile the First and Second of the New Armies (in all twelve divisions) were improving in training and progressing in equipment. A number of Territorial divisions fully equipped and in good order, whose training was now advanced, were also available at home. The large numbers of armed and organized soldiers in the United Kingdom should have removed all apprehension of oversea invasion.

At intervals during the next three

months there were actually ordered to the Dardanelles :——

From England.

The 29th Division.
Two first-line Territorial divisions.
The Royal Naval Division.
A Yeomanry mounted division.

From Egypt.

Two Australian divisions.
One extra Australian brigade.
The Lancashire Territorial Division.
One Indian Brigade.

From France.

Two French divisions.

All these troops were available for moving at this moment. The transport for their conveyance by sea could readily have been procured. All, or their equivalent, and more were subsequently sent. Together they comprised an army of at least 150,000 men. This army could have been concentrated in the Eastern Mediterranean in readiness to intervene at any point selected, some time before the end of March. If at any time in January it had been deliberately decided to use such an army, according to some good plan and with a resolute purpose, in a great combined operation to seize the Gallipoli Peninsula and thus open the passage for the Fleet, few will now doubt that a complete victory would have been gained.

On the other hand, apart from the 29th Division, all these troops had been raised or permanently embodied only since the outbreak of the war. To open a new campaign on a large scale was a most serious decision, in view of their partially trained character and of the general shortage of munitions. This was the justification for the naval attack. It also within its limits presented a logical and consistent scheme of war. Either plan was defensible. But for what happened there can be no defence except human infirmity. To drift into a new campaign piecemeal and without any definite decision or careful plan, would have been scouted by everyone. Yet so obliquely were these issues presented, so baffling were the personal factors involved, that the War Council were drawn insensibly and irresistibly into the gulf.

* * * *

Lord Kitchener in the Toils.

The workings of Lord Kitchener's mind constituted at this period a feature almost as puzzling as the great war problem itself. His prestige and authority were immense. He was the sole mouthpiece of War Office opinion in the War Council. Everyone had the greatest admiration for his character, and everyone felt fortified, amid the terrible and incalculable events of the opening months of the war, by his commanding presence. When he gave a decision it was invariably accepted as final. He was never, to my belief, overruled by the War Council or the Cabinet in any military matter, great or small. No single unit was ever sent or withheld contrary, not merely to his agreement, but to his advice. Scarcely anyone ever ventured to argue with him in Council. Respect for the man, sympathy for him in his immense labours, confidence in his professional judgment, and the belief that he had plans deeper and wider than any we could see, silenced misgivings and disputes, whether in the Council or at the War Office. All-powerful, imperturbable, reserved, he dominated absolutely our counsels at this time in all that concerned the organization and employment of the armies.

Yet behind this imposing and splendid front lay many weaknesses, evidences of which became increasingly disquieting. The Secretary of State for War had burdens laid upon him which no man, no three men even of his great capacity, could properly discharge. He had absorbed the whole War Office into his spacious personality. The General Staff was completely in abeyance, save as a machine for supplying him with information. Even as such a machine it was wofully weak.

Paralysis of the General Staff.

All the ablest officers and leading and strongest minds in the General Staff and Army Council, with the exception of Sir John Cowans, the Quartermaster-General, had hurried eagerly out of the country

Photo: Copyright.

BRITISH AND FRENCH CRUISERS AT THE DARDANELLES.

The photograph reproduced above, taken from one of the ships of the Allied Fleet at the Dardanelles, shows the British and French cruisers moving into position for the bombardment of the outer forts.

with the Expeditionary Force and were now in France, feeling that they ought to control the whole conduct of the war from the highly localized point of view of the British General Headquarters at St. Omer. In their place, filling vitally important situations, were officers on the retired list or men whose opinions had never counted weightily in British military thought. These officers were petrified by Lord Kitchener's personality and position. They none of them showed the natural force and ability to argue questions out with him vigorously as man to man. He towered up in his uniform as a Field-Marshal and Cabinet Minister besides, and they saluted as subordinates on a drill-ground. They never presented him with well-considered general reasonings about the whole course of the war. They stood ready to execute his decisions to the best of their ability.

It was left to the Members of the War Council to write papers upon the broad strategic view of the war. It was left to the Chancellor of the Exchequer, Mr. Lloyd George, to discern and proclaim to the Cabinet in unmistakable terms the impending military collapse of Russia. It was left to me to offer at any rate one method of influencing the political situation in the Near East in default of comprehensive military schemes. And Lord Kitchener himself was left to face the rushing, swirling torrent of events with no rock of clear, well-thought-out doctrine and calculation at his back.

In consequence he gave decisions now in this direction, now in that, which were markedly influenced by the daily impressions he sustained, which impressions were often of a fleeting nature. As a result his decisions were sometimes contradictory. He was torn between two perfectly clear-cut views of the war, both urged upon him with force and passion, with wealth of fact and argument.

East or West.

All the leading soldiers in the British Army, all the august authority

Photo: Elliott & Fry.

GENERAL SIR JOHN COWANS.

Quartermaster-General of the British Army during the Great War, Sir John Cowans entered the service in 1881, receiving a commission in the Rifle Brigade. In the years that followed he held many important military appointments, being Director-General of military education in India and later from 1910–12 Director-General of the Territorial Force. In 1912 he became Quartermaster-General and was made a member of the Army Council.

of the French High Command, asserted that the sole path to victory lay in sending every single man and gun and shell to the French Front to "kill Germans" and break their lines in the west. All the opinion of the War Council, which certainly contained men who had established themselves as the leading figures of the public life of their generation, was focused upon the southern and eastern theatre as the scene for the campaign of 1915. Kitchener himself was strongly drawn in this direction by his own eastern interest and knowledge. He saw to the full the vision of what success in this quarter would mean, but he also felt what we did not feel in the same degree—the fearful alternative pressure to which he was continually subjected from the French Front.

The problem was not insoluble. The task of reconciling these apparently opposed conceptions was not impossible. A well-conceived and elaborated plan and programme could have been devised in January for action in the Near East in March, April, May or even June, and for a subsequent great concentration and operation on the Western Front in the autumn of 1915, or better still under far more favourable conditions in the spring of 1916. The successive development of both policies in their proper sequence and each in its integrity was perfectly feasible if the great authorities concerned could have been won over. However, in the event Lord Kitchener succumbed to conflicting forces and competing policies.

Lord Kitchener's Many Burdens.

Beside these trials and burdens, to which he was certainly not able to rise superior, stood the whole vast business of recruiting, organizing and equipping the New Armies; and behind this again there now marched steadily into view a series of problems connected with the manufacture and purchase of munitions upon a scale never dreamed of by any human being up till this period. These problems comprised the entire social and industrial life of the country and touched the whole economic and financial system of the world. Add to this the daily exposition of all military business in Cabinet and in Council—a process most trying and burdensome to Lord Kitchener, and one in which he felt himself at a disadvantage: add, further,

the continuous series of decisions upon executive matters covering the vast field of the war, including important operations and expeditions which were campaigns in themselves, and it will be realized that the strain that descended upon the King's greatest subject was far more than mortal man could bear.

It must, however, be stated that Lord Kitchener in no way sought to lighten these terrific burdens. On the contrary, he resented promptly any attempt to interfere in and even scrutinize his vast domains of responsibility. He resisted tenaciously the efforts which were made from January onwards to remove the production of munitions of all kinds from his control as Secretary of State. He devolved on to subordinates as little as he could. He sought to manage the Great War by the same sort of personal control that he had used with so much success in the command of the tiny Nile Expedition. He kept the General Staff, or what was left of it, in a condition of complete subservience and practical abeyance. He even reached out, as his Cabinet Office justified, into political spheres in questions of Ireland, of Temperance, and of Industrial Organization.

His Courage and Kindness.

It is idle at this date to affect to disregard or conceal these facts. Indeed, the greatness of Lord Kitchener and his lasting claims upon the respect and gratitude of succeeding generations of his fellow-countrymen, for whose cause and safety he fought with single-hearted purpose and a giant's strength, will only be fortified by the fullest comprehension of his character and of his difficulties. If this story and the facts and documents on which it rests constitute any reflection upon his military policy, I must also testify to the overwhelming weight of the burdens laid upon him, to his extraordinary patience and courage in all the difficulties and perplexities through which we were passing, and

Photo: Cribb.

EQUIPPING OLD BATTLESHIPS FOR THE DARDANELLES.

When preparations were under way for the attack upon the Dardanelles, certain battleships which had been considered obsolete for normal duties with the Grand Fleet were pressed into service. These ships, many of which were ready for breaking up, were fitted with new 12-inch guns and sent to join the fleet in the Ægean. These old vessels proved themselves in every way suited to their task and had the attack been pressed with more vigour, and with less regard for the safety of ships which were practically useless for any other purpose, it can hardly be doubted that complete penetration of the Narrows would have been achieved.

to his unvarying kindness and courtesy to me.

* * * *

The 29th Division.

The War Council of January 28, besides deciding definitely and finally in favour of the naval attempt upon the Dardanelles, showed itself earnestly desirous of procuring some military force to influence the political situation in the Balkans. It was not thought at this time that any force which could be collected would be equal to the storming of the Gallipoli Peninsula, and this operation never received the slightest countenance at this juncture. All that was hoped for was to secure the subtraction from the forces in England, but destined for France, of one or two divisions, including the 29th Division (our remaining Regular Division), and the employment of this force as a lever to encourage M. Venizelos and the Greek King and Government to enter the war on our side in aid of Serbia.

After much discussion with Sir John French, the War Council of February 9 decided to offer the 29th Division (which was still in England) to Greece, together with a French division, if she would join the Allies. I thought that this offer, taken by itself and apart from any effects which might result from the naval attack on the Dardanelles, was wholly inadequate. I did not believe that Greece, and still less Bulgaria, would be influenced by the prospects of such very limited aid. Indeed, the exiguous dimensions of the assistance were in themselves a confession of our weakness. This view was justified, and the offer was promptly declined by M. Venizelos.

* * * *

Naval Preparations.

Meanwhile the preparations for the naval attack had been steadily moving forward. All the ships assigned to the task were already on the spot or approaching it. By an informal arrangement with M. Venizelos the island of Lemnos, containing the spacious harbour of Mudros, had been placed at our disposal as a base for the assembling Fleet, and two battalions of Marines from the Royal Naval Division had already been dispatched thither. The sole object of this small force was to provide landing parties for Admiral Carden's Fleet, in case during his operations the opportunity should offer of destroying guns or forts already disabled in parts of the Gallipoli Peninsula where the enemy's resistance had virtually ceased. But once it began to be realized that troops in considerable numbers were becoming available, Sir Henry Jackson and Lord Fisher began to press for their employment in the Dardanelles operation.

"The provision of the necessary military forces," wrote Sir Henry Jackson on February 15, "to enable the fruits of this heavy naval undertaking to be gathered must never be lost sight of; the transports carrying them should be in readiness to enter the Straits as soon as it is seen the forts at the Narrows will be silenced. . . . The naval bombardment is not recommended as a sound military operation, unless a strong military force is ready to assist in the operation, or, at least, follow it up immediately the forts are silenced." There was much mixed thinking in this. The difference between "assisting in the operation" and "following it up immediately the forts are silenced" was fundamental. Fisher on the other hand was perfectly clear. He wanted the Gallipoli Peninsula stormed and held by the Army. This idea neither Lord Kitchener nor the War Council would at this time have entertained.

"I hope you were successful with Kitchener," wrote the First Sea Lord to me on the evening of February 16, "in getting divisions sent to Lemnos *to-morrow*! Not a grain of wheat will come from the Black Sea unless there is military occupation of the Dardanelles, and it will be the wonder of the ages that no troops were sent to co-operate with the Fleet with half a million soldiers in England.

"*The war of lost opportunities!!! Why did Antwerp fall?*

"The Haslar boats might go *at once* to Lemnos, as somebody will land at Gallipoli some time or other."

Quasi-political Factors.

I still adhered to the integrity of the naval plan. Knowing what I did of the military situation and of the state of our armies, I did not underrate the serious nature of a decision to commit British troops to severe and indefinite fighting with the Turks on the Gallipoli Peninsula.

I had of course thought long and earnestly about what would follow if the naval attack succeeded and a British Fleet entered the Marmora. I expected that if, and when, the Turkish forts began to fall, the Greeks would join us, and that the whole of their armies would be at our disposal thenceforward. I hoped that the apparition of a British Fleet off Constantinople and the flight or destruction of the *Goeben* and the *Breslau* would be followed by political reactions of a far-reaching character, as the result of which the Turkish Government would negotiate or withdraw to Asia. I trusted that good diplomacy following hot-foot on a great war event, would induce Bulgaria to march on Adrianople. Lastly, I was sure that Russia, whatever her need elsewhere, would not remain indifferent to the fate of Constantinople and that further reinforcements would be forthcoming from her.

It was on these quasi-political factors that I counted in our own military penury, for the means of exploiting and consolidating any success which might fall to the Fleet. The reader will see how far these speculations appear to have been well founded.

But of course, if after all Lord Kitchener and the War Council saw their way to form a substantial British army in the East, the prospects of a great and successful combination were vastly more hopeful. Such an army assembled in Egypt and the Greek islands might well be the motor muscle which would decide and animate all the rest. It could either seize the Isthmus of Bulair if the Turks evacuated the Peninsula after the Fleet had passed the Straits; or if a Convention was made with Turkey, it could occupy Constantinople promptly. Incidentally, if landing parties on a larger scale were needed during the passage of the Fleet, they could be supplied from this source. Thus a considerable unity was established on the immediate step of sending troops to the East between persons who on the further steps held very different views.

Amid the conflicting opinions, competing plans and shifting exigencies of the situation, the desirability of concentrating the largest possible army in the eastern Mediterranean with extreme promptitude, and placing at its head a supreme general, seemed to all of us at the Admiralty to be obvious. Therefore we at all times, in all discussions, supported everything that would promote and expedite this concentration.

Decisions of February 16.

February 16 was a Day of Resolve. At a meeting of the principal Ministers on the War Council, including the Prime Minister, Lord Kitchener and myself, the following decisions, eventually incorporated in the Decisions of the War Council, were taken :—

(1) The 29th Division to be dispatched to Lemnos at the earliest possible date, preferably within nine or ten days.

(2) Arrangements to be made to send a force from Egypt, if required.

(3) The whole of the above forces, with the Royal Marine battalions already dispatched, to be available in case of necessity to support the naval attack on the Dardanelles.

(4) Horse-boats to be taken out with the 29th Division, and the Admiralty to make arrangements to collect small craft, tugs and lighters in the Levant.

The decision of February 16 is the foundation of the military attack upon the Dardanelles. "It had not," say the Dardanelles Commissioners, "been definitely decided to use troops on a large scale, but they were to be massed so as to be in readiness should their assistance be required." On this day Admiral Carden was informed that Mudros harbour could be used by him as a base, and Rear-Admiral Wemyss was appointed as senior naval officer there. In the evening of the 16th in pursuance of the decisions which had been taken, I directed Admiral Oliver, Chief of the War Staff, to have transports collected with the utmost speed for the 29th Division, and he issued

orders to this effect on the same day. The resolve to concentrate an army undoubtedly carried with it acceptance of the possibility of using it in certain eventualities. But these were not as yet defined.

Conflicting Pressures upon Lord Kitchener.

During the 17th it appeared that great pressure was being put upon Lord Kitchener from General Headquarters not to divert the 29th Division from France. In fact, as has been justly observed by the Official Naval Historian, the use of the 29th Division became a cardinal issue between what were beginning to be called in our secret circles "The Western" and "The Eastern" policies. Lord Kitchener became the prey of these contending opinions and forces, and he was plunged into a state of most painful indecision between them.

So far, not a shot had been fired at the Dardanelles, but we were on the eve of the attack on the outer forts. When we met in Council again on the 19th, it became clear that Lord Kitchener had changed his mind. He informed us that he could not consent to the dispatch of the 29th Division to the East. He gave as his reason the dangerous weakness of Russia and his fear lest large masses of German troops should be brought back from the Russian Front to attack our troops in France. I cannot believe that this argument had really weighed with him. He must have known that, apart from all other improbabilities, it was physically impossible for the Germans to transport great armies from Russia to the French Front under two or three months at the very least, and that the 29th Division—one single division—could not affect the issue appreciably if they did so. He used the argument to fortify a decision which he had arrived at after a most painful heart-searching on other and general grounds.

The Council bowed to Lord Kitchener's will, though its wishes and opinions were unaltered. It was decided to postpone the departure of the 29th Division, but the Admiralty was instructed nevertheless to continue the preparation of transports for it and other troops. On the 20th I minuted to the Director of Transports: "All preparations are to be made to embark the 29th Division with the least possible delay. The dispatch of this division is not, however, finally decided."

The Day of Recoil.

The 20th was a day of Recoil. Lord Kitchener had refused to send the 29th

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

FRENCH BATTLESHIPS IN MUDROS BAY

Three of the French ships which took part in the operations at the Dardanelles. From left to right these are: *St Louis, Charlemagne* and *Suffren*. The two last-named were in action on February 19 in the attack upon the outer forts.

Drawing: Edwards.

DIAGRAM SHOWING HOW TRAWLERS SWEEP FOR MINES.

The work of mine-sweeping is often dangerous in the extreme, and the comparatively small number of casualties sustained during the war must be attributed to the great skill with which the crews of the mine-sweepers carried out their task. Here two trawlers, steaming abreast on a parallel course, are seen with the trawling gear in operation. The gear consists of a weighted steel wire hawser which, towed under the water by the two trawlers, fouls the mines and breaks their moorings. The mines rising to the surface are destroyed by gun or rifle-fire.

Division. He even seemed opposed to any large concentration of troops in the East. "The French," he wrote to me (February 20), "are in a great way about so many troops being employed as you told them of. I have just seen Grey and hope we shall not be saddled with a French contingent for the Dardanelles." He deprecated my gathering transports at Alexandria for 40,000 men as a precautionary measure, to which he had previously assented. He went further. He sent his Aide-de-Camp, the brave and accomplished Colonel Fitzgerald, over to the First Sea Lord and the Admiralty Transport Department to say that the 29th Division was not to go. The First Sea Lord and the Director of Naval Transport thereupon assumed that the question had been finally settled by agreement between Lord Kitchener and me. The orders for the collection and fitting of the transports for this Division, which had been operative since the 16th, were accordingly cancelled, and the whole fleet of twenty-two vessels was released for other duties and dispersed without my being informed.

Councils of February 24 and 26.

The discussion was resumed on February 24 and 26, but we now met under the impression of the actual attack on the Dardanelles. The bombardment of the outer forts had begun on February 19, and although the operations had been interrupted by bad weather a favourable impression had been sustained. Moreover, open action had now been taken. If the 16th had been a day of Resolve, and the 20th a day of Recoil, the 24th and 26th were days of Compromise and Half-measures.

Photo: Elliott & Fry.

GENERAL SIR WILLIAM BIRDWOOD.

The famous Commander of the Australian and New Zealand Army Corps on Gallipoli, Birdwood entered the army in 1883. He served first with the Royal Scots Fusiliers and three years later transferred to the 11th Bengal Lancers. He devoted many years of his career to the service of India, service interrupted only by the South African War and the Great War. He was severely wounded in South Africa, and in the Great War he was appointed, in 1918, to the command of the Fifth Army.

On the 24th Lord Kitchener said that he " felt that if the Fleet could not get through the Straits unaided the Army ought to see the business through. The effect of a defeat in the Orient would be very serious. There could be no going back." Thus, at a stroke, the idea of discarding the naval attack, if it proved too difficult, and turning to some other objective, was abandoned and the possibility of a great military enterprise seemed to be accepted.

On this I again argued strenuously, both on the 24th and on the 26th, for the dispatch of the 29th Division, and I used to the full the hopes and interest which the naval attack was increasingly exciting.

Lord Kitchener, notwithstanding his pronouncement, adhered to his refusal. He had sent General Birdwood, an officer whom he knew well, and in whom he rightly had confidence, from Egypt (where he was commanding the Australasian Army Corps) to the Dardanelles to report on the prospects and possibilities of military action. On February 24 the War Office requested the Admiralty to send the following telegram, which was drafted by Sir Henry Jackson, to Admiral Carden :—

" . . . The War Office consider the occupation of the Southern end of the peninsula to the line Suandere-Chana Ovasi as not an obligatory operation for ensuring success of the first main object which is to destroy the permanent batteries. Though troops should always be held in readiness to assist in minor operations on both sides of the Straits in order to destroy masked batteries and engage the enemy forces covering them, our main army can remain in camp at Lemnos till the passage of the Straits is in our hands, when holding Bulair lines may be necessary to stop all supplies reaching the peninsula. You should discuss this operation with General Birdwood on his arrival before deciding any major operations beyond covering range of ships' guns and report conclusions arrived at." Yet two days later, on February 26, Lord Kitchener

authorized General Birdwood to draw upon the Australasian Army Corps "up to the total limit of its strength" for the purpose of aiding the Fleet.

All these half-measures, which nevertheless were assuming serious proportions and marked a change in the whole character of the operation, appeared so perilous to me that at the Council on the 26th I formally disclaimed responsibility for the consequences of any military operations that might arise. My disclaimer was entered in the records. Then the Prime Minister, making a marked intervention, appealed most strongly to Lord Kitchener not to allow the force available in the East to be deprived of the one Regular Division so necessary to its effective composition.

It was useless. After the Council I waited behind. I knew the Prime Minister agreed with me, and indeed the whole Council, with the exception of Lord Kitchener, were of one mind. I urged the Prime Minister to make his authority effective and to insist upon the dispatch of the 29th Division to Lemnos or Alexandria. I felt at that moment in an intense way a foreboding of disaster. I knew it was a turning-point in the struggle, as surely as I know now that the consequences are graven on the monuments of history. The Prime Minister did not feel that anything more could be done. He had done his best to persuade Lord Kitchener. He could not overrule him or face his resignation upon a question like this, for the whole military opinion of the General Staff and of the French authorities would be upon his side.

My Memorandum of February 25.

On February 25 I had prepared an appreciation of the general situation and I had used this to argue from in the War Council of the 26th. It was now printed

Photo: Cribb.

BEFORE SAILING FOR THE DARDANELLES.

Admiral Sir Henry Oliver is seen here being piped aboard the *Queen Elizabeth* shortly before the new super-Dreadnought sailed for the Dardanelles. He is being received by Admiral de Robeck (second from the right), the newly appointed second-in-command to Admiral Carden.

and circulated to the Prime Minister, the Chancellor of the Exchequer and Mr. Balfour. I reprint it here as it explains my position more clearly than any other document of this period.

APPRECIATION.

1. *Russia.*—We must not expect Russia to invade Germany successfully for many months to come. But though the Russian offensive is paralysed, we may count on her not only maintaining a successful defensive, but effectively containing and retaining very large German forces on her front. There is no reason to believe that Germany will be able to transfer to the West anything like 1,000,000 men at any time; nor anyhow that German forces large enough to influence the situation can arrive in the West before the middle of April.

2. The Anglo-French lines in the West are very strong, and cannot be turned. Our position and forces in France are incomparably stronger than at the beginning of the war, when we had opposed to us nearly three-fourths of the first line of the German Army. We ought to welcome a German assault on the largest possible scale. The chances of repulsing it would be strong in our favour; and even if its success necessitated retirement to another line, the superior losses of the Germans would afford good compensation. The issue in the West in the next three months ought not to cause anxiety. But, anyhow, it is not an issue which could be decisively affected by four or five British divisions.

3. For us the decisive point, and the only point where the initiative can be seized and maintained, is in the Balkan Peninsula. With proper military and naval co-operation, and with forces which are available, we can make certain of taking Constantinople by the end of March, and capturing or destroying all Turkish forces in Europe (except those in Adrianople). This blow can be struck before the fate of Serbia is decided. Its effect on the whole of the Balkans will be decisive. It will eliminate Turkey as a military factor.

4. The following military forces (at least) are available immediately:—

	Men.
In England { 29th Division, Another Territorial Division }	36,000
Under orders for Lemnos: R.N. Division	12,000
From Egypt: 2 Australian Divisions	39,000
French Division (say)	20,000
Russian Brigade (say)	8,000
Total	115,000

5. All these troops are capable of being concentrated within striking distance of the Bulair Isthmus by March 21 if orders are given now. If the naval operations have not succeeded by then, they can be used to attack the Gallipoli Peninsula and make sure that the Fleet gets through. As soon as the Dardanelles are open, they can either (*a*) operate from Constantinople to extirpate any Turkish forces in Europe; or (*b*) if Bulgaria comes in at our invitation to occupy up to the Enos-Midia line, they can proceed through Bulgaria to the aid of Serbia; or (*c*) if Bulgaria is merely confirmed in a friendly neutrality, but Greece comes in, they can proceed through Salonika to the aid of Serbia.

W. S. C.

February 25, 1915.

And of February 27.

And on the 27th:—

"I must now put on record my opinion that the military force provided, viz. two Australasian divisions supported by the nine naval battalions and the French division, is not large enough for the work it may have to do; and that the absence of any British regular troops will, if fighting occurs, expose the naval battalions and the Australians to undue risk.

"Even if the Navy succeed unaided in forcing the passage, the weakness of the military force may compel us to forgo a large part of the advantages which would otherwise follow."

I still hoped after the meeting of the 26th that in a day or two Lord Kitchener's mood would change, that the Prime Minister would manage to bring him round to the general view, and that the

29th Division would be allowed to start. The War Council, while deferring to his decision, had decided that the transports were still to be held together in readiness for it. After the meeting of the 26th was over I inquired from the Transport Department as to what exact state of preparation the transports were in, expecting to find that they were ready. I then learned that on the 20th they had been countermanded and were now utterly dispersed. I was staggered at this, and wrote at once to Lord Kitchener in protest.

I immediately renewed the orders to the Transport Department, but it was not found possible to reassemble and fit the necessary vessels before March 16.

Final Release of the 29th Division.

The actual opening of the bombardment and the success of the Navy at the outer forts, which will be described in the next chapter, induced a further change of view. "Another meeting of the War Council," to quote the report of the Dardanelles Commission, "was held on March 3. By this time Lord Kitchener's opposition to the dispatch of the 29th Division had apparently weakened. On the question being raised by Mr. Churchill he said that he proposed to leave the question open until March 10, when he hoped to have heard from General Birdwood." General Birdwood, however, arrived at the Dardanelles before the 10th. On the 5th he telegraphed to Lord Kitchener: "I am very doubtful if the Navy can force the passage unassisted." . . .

This was followed on the 6th by a telegram to the following effect: "I have already informed you that I consider the Admiral's forecast is too sanguine, and though we may have a better estimate by March 12, I doubt his ability to force the passage unaided." On March 10, Lord Kitchener, being then somewhat reassured as regards the position in other theatres of war, and being also possibly impressed by General Birdwood's reports, announced to the War Council that "he felt that the situation was now sufficiently secure to justify the despatch of the 29th Division."

". . . The decision of February 16, the execution of which had been suspended on the 20th, again became operative on March 10. In the meanwhile, three weeks of valuable time had been lost. The transports, which might have left on February 22, did not get away till March 16."

When Lord Kitchener had decided in his heart that if the Navy failed to force the Dardanelles, he would storm the Gallipoli Peninsula, he ought to have declared it to his colleagues. Failing this he should at any rate have so moved and organized his troops as to leave the different alternatives of action open to him. Most of all should he have set his General Staff to work out plans for the various contingencies which were now plainly coming into view.

Comments of the Dardanelles Commissioners.

"From the time the decision of February 16 was taken," say the Dardanelles Commissioners, "there were really only two alternatives which were thoroughly defensible. One was to accept the view that by reason of our existing commitments elsewhere an adequate force could not be made available for expeditionary action in the eastern Mediterranean; to face the possible loss of prestige which would have been involved in an acknowledgment of partial failure, and to have fallen back on the original plan of abandoning the naval attack on the Dardanelles, when once it became apparent that military operations on a large scale would be necessary. The other was to have boldly faced the risks which would have been involved elsewhere and at once to have made a determined effort to force the passage of the Dardanelles by a rapid and well-organized combined attack in great strength. Unfortunately, the Government adopted neither of these courses. . . . We think that Mr. Churchill was quite justified in attaching the utmost importance to the delays which occurred in despatching the 29th Division and the Territorial Division from this country."

CHAPTER XL

FALL OF THE OUTER FORTS AND THE SECOND GREEK OFFER

February 19—The Bombardment Opens—The Outer Forts Destroyed—Landing of Marines—Successful Conclusion of the First Phase—Increasing Prospects of Military Aid—Consequences of the Attack on the Dardanelles—Conservative Leaders invited to Conference—Effects of the Dardanelles upon the Balkan States—Hopes of Italian Intervention—March 1: The Second Greek Offer—Disastrous Character of Russian Action—King Constantine Rebuffed—Resignation of M. Venizelos.

AT nine minutes to ten on the morning of February 19 the British and French fleets concentrated at the Dardanelles began the bombardment of the outer forts.[1] These forts were four in number and mounted nineteen primary guns. Of these all but four were old pattern short guns with a maximum range of 6,000 to 8,000 yards. Only the two pairs of 9·4-inch guns in the two smaller forts could fire above 11,000 yards. The whole of these defences therefore were exposed to bombardment from the ships at ranges to which they could make no effective reply.

February 19.

The attacking fleet was formed into three divisions:—

1ST DIVISION.	2ND DIVISION.	3RD DIVISION.
Inflexible	*Vengeance*	*Suffren*
Agamemnon	*Albion*	*Bouvet*
Queen Elizabeth	*Cornwallis*	*Charlemagne*
	Irresistible	*Gaulois*
	Triumph	

These vessels mounted 178 guns of 5½-inch and upwards, for the most part more modern than those in the forts, heavier and capable of outranging them in every class of gun. The operations which ensued are minutely described in the Official Naval History, the manœuvres of every ship and the results of almost every shot being carefully set out. It is not intended to repeat this here.

[1] The map facing page 535 will be found relevant to this chapter.

The Bombardment Opens.

The attack was to have been divided into two parts: first, a long-range bombardment, and, second, overwhelming the forts at short range and sweeping a channel towards the entrance of the Straits. Ammunition was sparingly used and at first the ships were kept under way. It soon became evident that the moving ships could not achieve sufficient accuracy of fire, and at 10.30 all were ordered to anchor in positions outside the enemy's range which enabled one ship to observe from a different angle the fire of another.

By 2 o'clock it was considered that the effect of the slow long-range bombardment was sufficient to enable the closer attack to be made, and the bombarding vessels closed to about 6,000 yards. Up till this time no fort had replied to the fire. But at 4.45 p.m., on the *Suffren*, *Vengeance* and *Cornwallis* advancing to within 5,000 yards range, the two smaller forts with their modern guns came into action, showing that their guns had not been damaged by the long-range firing. The *Vengeance* and *Cornwallis*, reinforced by the *Agamemnon*, *Inflexible* and *Gaulois*, returned the fire, temporarily silencing one of the forts. Rear-Admiral de Robeck, the second in command, whose flag was flying in the *Vengeance*, wished to continue the action at close range,

Photo: Cribb.

A NAVAL REHEARSAL.

An operation such as the landing of an army on the shores of the Gallipoli Peninsula necessitates a vast amount of organization and the working out of plans down to the minutest detail. The transfer of troops from ships to the shore is in itself an operation by no means devoid of difficulty and one which requires rehearsal. Here officers and men of the Royal Navy are seen carrying out an exercise of the kind which in April, 1915, they were called upon to practise against a position held by some of the most resolute defensive fighters in the world.

but as it was now nearly half-past five and the light was fading, the Commander-in-Chief signalled a "General Recall," and the day's operations came to a close. Only 139 12-inch shells had been fired by the Fleet.

The results of this inconclusive bombardment seemed to show, first, that it was necessary for ships to anchor before accurate shooting could be made; secondly, that direct fire was better than indirect fire; and, thirdly, that it was not sufficient to hit the forts with the naval shells—actual hits must be made on the guns or their mountings. This last fact was important.

The Outer Forts Destroyed.

The next day the weather broke and no operations were possible for five days. On the 25th the bombardment was resumed in the light of the experience gained. The *Agamemnon* fired at Fort Helles, the *Queen Elizabeth* at Sedd-el-Bahr and later at Fort Helles, the *Irresistible* at Orkanie and the *Gaulois* at Kum Kale. All these ships and others reciprocally observed and checked each other's fire. The forts replied, but without much success.

The effect of the bombardment was remarkable. It proved conclusively the great accuracy of naval fire, provided good observation could be obtained. After eighteen rounds the *Queen Elizabeth* hit directly and disabled both the modern guns in Fort Helles. With an expenditure of thirty-five rounds the *Irresistible* destroyed both the modern guns in Orkanie, one early and one late in the day. Thus all four long-range guns defending the mouth of the Straits were individually disabled or destroyed for a very moderate expenditure of ammunition.

In the afternoon the ships advanced to within close range of the forts and brought a heavy fire to bear on all of them. All the forts were silenced. The older forts with their short-range armament were considered by the Turks mere shell-traps and their

Photo: Copyright.

H.M.S. *AGAMEMNON* TAKING AMMUNITION ABOARD.

A work-a-day scene on board *Agamemnon* taken during the early stages of the Gallipoli campaign. A lighter has come alongside and men are shown hauling on the tackle employed in transferring cordite from the lighter to the battleship. The cases shown on deck, each of which contains a single charge of cordite for the heavy guns of the battleship, are of the type used in the magazine to guard against accidental ignition.

Photo: Copyright.

NAVAL LANDING PARTY COMING ASHORE AT KUM KALE.

A remarkable photograph showing demolition parties and marines about to land at Kum Kale to complete the work of destruction so well carried out by the guns of the fleet. Parties were landed at both Kum Kale and Sedd-el-Bahr, the marines being employed as covering parties whilst demolition of guns and works was in progress.

garrisons were withdrawn from them. After the Armistice the Turks stated that the batteries and ammunition dumps were all destroyed, but none of the magazines touched. The forts were evacuated because the short-range fire of the Fleet had destroyed them entirely. The loss of life on both sides was small. Practically no damage was done to the Fleet, although the *Agamemnon* was hit six or seven times. In all only three men were killed and seven wounded.

Landing of Marines.

It will be seen that this was a very important and satisfactory day. Only thirty-one 15-inch shells had been fired in all, besides eighty-one British 12-inch and fifty from the corresponding French guns. The bombardment clearly proved the power of the ships anchored at about 12,000 yards, if good observation at right angles to the range was available, to destroy the Turkish guns without undue expenditure of ammunition. It was now possible to sweep the approaches and the entrance to the Straits, which was done on the evenings of the 25th and the 26th. Three battleships entered the Straits and completed the ruin of the outer forts from inside.

A still more remarkable and, as we thought at the time, more hopeful development followed. On the 26th and following days, covered by the guns of the Fleet, demolition parties of 50 to 100 sailors and marines were landed, who blew to pieces with guncotton all the guns in Sedd-el-Bahr, as well as in the two forts on the Asiatic side. They were not seriously opposed by the Turks. In all forty-eight guns were destroyed or found in a disabled condition by the landing

Photo: Central News.

ASHORE AT GALLIPOLI.

A marine sentry is seen here on duty guarding one of the approaches to the spot where a demolition party is at work. Although at this time the Turkish land forces were not in great strength members of the covering and demolition parties were in constant danger from snipers, who, according to accounts given at the time, were both active and numerous.

parties, only nine men being killed and wounded.[1]

Successful Conclusion of the First Phase.

Thus by March 2 the whole of the outer defences of the Dardanelles were destroyed, including nineteen primary guns, of which four were modern. These constituted approximately in number and in quality one-fifth of the whole of the gun defences of the Straits. The Fleet was now able to sweep and enter the Straits for a distance of six miles up to the limit of the Kephez minefield.

[1] Of the ten heavy guns in Sedd-el-Bahr only three had been destroyed by the bombardment. Of the ten guns in Kum Kale seven were apparently found undamaged. Fort Orkanie was also entered and both guns were found disabled. Six modern howitzers on the cliff to the east of Sedd-el-Bahr and a number of smaller guns were also destroyed.

The first phase of the Dardanelles operations was thus completed.

The greatest satisfaction was expressed at the Admiralty, and I found myself in these days surrounded by smiling faces. Lord Kitchener told me that his officers who were in contact with the Admiralty reported a spirit of strong confidence. If the Dardanelles Commissioners could only have taken the expert evidence on the feasibility of ships attacking forts in the first week of March, 1915, instead of in the spring of 1917, they would have been impressed by the robust character of naval opinion on these questions. They would also have been struck by the number of persons who were in favour of the Dardanelles operations and claimed to have contributed to their initiation. In short, their task would have resembled the labours of the Royal Commission which inquired into the origin of the Tanks.

Each day at the meetings of the Admiralty War Group I invited Sir Henry Jackson to give his appreciation of the telegrams from the Fleet. These appreciations were up to this point highly encouraging. I telegraphed to Admiral Carden at the end of February asking how many fine days he estimated he would require to get through. He replied on March 2: "Fourteen." It really looked as if we had found a way in which the Navy could help the allied cause in a new and most important direction. However, I observe that I informed the War Council on February 26 that "the Admiralty could not guarantee success and that the main

difficulty would be encountered at the Narrows. All that could be said was that the reduction of the outer forts gave a good augury for success." I also pointed out repeatedly that a purely naval operation would not in itself make the Straits free for unarmoured merchant ships.

The Inner and Intermediate Defences of the Dardanelles were now exposed to the attack of the Fleet. These defences consisted of ten forts and batteries of varying size and importance equally disposed on the European and Asiatic shores; of the minefields closing the Straits in successive lines; and of the mobile batteries and howitzers which protected both the forts and the minefields. To this problem the Fleet now addressed itself.

* * *

Increasing Prospects of Military Aid.

From February 24 onwards I could contemplate that Lord Kitchener would in certain circumstances be willing to use an army not merely to exploit a victory of the Fleet, but actually if need be to contribute to it on a large scale. All else was uncertain. What he would do, when and how, he would do it, remained impenetrable.

The increasing possibilities of extensive military action made me anxious about the conditions which prevailed in the War Office. I knew that practically no military staff work was being done. The various contingencies possible were not being studied in detail. Numbers, dates, supplies and the organization appropriate to the various forms of action which might be required, were in the most vague condition, in so far as they were not carried in the comprehensive mind of the Secretary of State for War himself. He was in constant communication with General Birdwood at the Dardanelles.

Photo: Central News.

BRITISH MARINES IN A LOOK-OUT POST.

As will be seen from this photograph there was abundance of cover among the ruined buildings left standing near the principal landing places. The marines in this photograph are making use of an ancient loop-holed wall. Such structures as that shown here, greatly strengthened, were used by the Turks in their defence of the shores when, a few weeks later, the men of the immortal 29th Division made their historic landing upon the Peninsula.

But he did not allow the General Staff nor the Quartermaster-General to meddle in the business at all at this stage, nor give them any inkling of the grave decisions which in certain circumstances he might wish to take, and which were evidently forming in his mind. Seeing all this I became increasingly apprehensive in the first week of March lest a military breakdown should occur.

I was determined not to be involved in responsibility for action far more momentous than any which the Admiralty was taking, but over which I had absolutely no control. I therefore early in March asked the Prime Minister to arrange an interview between me and Lord Kitchener in his presence. I then asked Lord Kitchener formally and pointedly whether he assumed responsibility for any military operations that might arise, and in particular for the measure of the forces required to achieve success. He replied at once that he certainly did so, and the Admiralty thereupon transferred on March 12 the Royal Naval Division to his command.

Photo: Elliott & Fry.

ADMIRAL OF THE FLEET SIR HENRY JACKSON.

Entering the Navy in 1868 Jackson, in the course of a long and distinguished career in the service, held many appointments of importance. He was Chief of the War Staff, 1912–14, and during the Great War was for a time, in 1915–16, First Sea Lord. Admiral Jackson was an expert on technical subjects and was the first man to introduce Hertzian waves for wireless telegraphy in battleships.

On March 10 the 29th Division was ordered to Lemnos, and on March 16 the earliest of its transports sailed. The War Office, however, did not embark it in the ships in any order or organization to fight on arrival at its destination.

* * * *

Consequences of the Attack on the Dardanelles.

The success of the naval attack upon the outer forts of the Dardanelles and the first penetration of the Straits produced reactions of high consequence throughout Europe, and their repercussion was apparent all over the world. "The Turkish Headquarters at the end of February," writes General Liman von Sanders, then the head of the German Military Mission, "expected the success of a break through by the hostile Fleet. Arrangements were made for the Sultan, the Court and Treasury to take refuge in the interior of Asia Minor."[1] Far away on the Chicago Stock Exchange wheat prices fell with suddenness.

In Europe, Russia asked for a public declaration about Constantinople. At the outset of the war the attitude of Russia had been perfectly correct. She had joined with

[1] *Five Years in Turkey*, by Liman von Sanders, p. 72.

England and France in assuring Turkey that the territorial integrity of the Ottoman Empire would be respected at the peace. But once Turkey, rejecting this fair offer, had taken sides against her, the Russian attitude changed. "The Turkish aggression," writes Monsieur Paléologue, the French Ambassador in Petrograd, November 9, 1914, "has resounded to the depths of the Russian conscience. . . . All the romantic Utopias of Slavism have suddenly awakened."[1] The supreme need of encouraging Russia in the midst of her disasters and defeats led Sir Edward Grey, as early as November 14, 1914, to instruct Sir George Buchanan to inform M. Sazonoff that the British Government recognized that "the question of the Straits and of Constantinople should be settled in conformity with Russian desires."

Photo: Central News.

GENERAL LIMAN VON SANDERS.

Commander-in-Chief of the Turkish forces at Gallipoli in 1915, Liman von Sanders was born in Prussia in 1855. He entered the German Army in 1874, and in 1914 was sent to Constantinople. Throughout the greater part of the war he directed the operations of the Turkish armies in the Middle East, and in 1918 was in command of the Turkish army opposing Allenby's forces in Palestine and Syria.

At the time this had remained a complete secret. But now in 1915 that there seemed to be a prospect of Constantinople falling into the hands of the Allies, Russian opinion required public reassurance. Such an announcement was bound to cause unfavourable reactions in Greece, Bulgaria and Roumania. Could we, on the other hand, afford to quarrel with or even dishearten Russia at the moment when she was reeling under the German cannonade, but was nevertheless contending manfully and was all the time vital to our hopes of general victory?

[1] *La Russie des Tsars*, Maurice Paléologue, Vol. I, p. 187.

Conservative Leaders invited to Conference.

So important was the decision judged, that at the beginning of March the Prime Minister invited the leaders of the Conservative Party, Lord Lansdowne and Mr. Bonar Law, to attend our Council on the subject. I was glad of this development and strongly advised it. I had long wanted to see a National Coalition formed. I viewed with great disquiet the spectacle of this powerful Conservative Party—almost all-powerful it had become since Liberal politics were shattered for the

time by the outbreak of the struggle—brooding morosely outside, with excellent information from the Services and complete detachment from all responsibility for the terrible business which had to go forward from day to day. We needed their aid. The Empire needed their aid. We wanted all their able men in positions of high and active authority. I had frequently talked to Mr. Asquith in this sense in the early months of the war, and I now pointed out that this moment, when some fruition and promise of success had come to us in the East, was of all others the time when the necessary fusion and coalition could be effected on terms honourable to both great parties. The Prime Minister was far from being unconscious of this aspect, or of the political instability which the situation would present should the general state of the war take a turn for the worse, as seemed very likely.

I hoped that this first meeting with the official chiefs of the Opposition—Mr. Balfour being already in our councils—might lead to rapid developments in the direction of our national unity and cohesion. The two Conservative leaders, however, showed plainly by their manner that they did not care to become responsible for a fraction only of the policy of the State and were chary of committing themselves in regard to a single incident. This was natural, but the results were unfortunate. The Council did not march satisfactorily, although a united decision was reached. And on the whole, as the result, a chilling impression of domestic politics was, I think, sustained by the Prime Minister.

In the early days of March both Great Britain and France apprised the Russian Government that they would agree to the annexation of Constantinople by Russia as a part of a victorious peace; and this momentous fact was accordingly made public on the 12th.

Effects of the Dardanelles upon the Balkan States.

In the Balkans the effect of the naval operations was electrical. The attitude of Bulgaria changed with lightning swiftness. Within a fortnight our Intelligence Reports showed that the Turks were being forced to move back to Adrianople and develop their front against Bulgaria. General Paget, the head of a special Mission then at Sofia, telegraphed to Lord Kitchener on March 17 that after an audience with the King he was convinced that "the operations in the Dardanelles have made a deep impression, that all possibility of Bulgaria attacking any Balkan State that might side with the Entente is now over, and there is some reason to think that shortly the Bulgarian Army will move against Turkey to co-operate in the Dardanelles operations."

The attitude of Roumania also became one of extreme and friendly vigilance. Russia, although she had not previously been able to spare more than 1,000 Cossacks for action in the Balkans, now offered the fullest naval co-operation and began to concentrate an army corps under General Istomine at Batoum to participate in what was believed to be the impending fall of Constantinople.

Hopes of Italian Intervention.

On March 2 our Minister at Bucharest telegraphed that the Roumanian Prime Minister had said that his conviction that Italy "would move soon" had become stronger. "My Russian colleague has twice seen the Italian Minister and while the latter had often before spoken to him about . . . Italy . . . joining us in the war, his language on the last two occasions was more precise than ever before and was indeed almost pressing. He spoke of acquisitions on the Adriatic coast, *and a share in the eventual partition of Turkey*. . . . Italy would have in a month's time an army of 1,800,000 men ready to move. . . ." Other similar indications flowed in. On March 5 I minuted to Sir Edward Grey: "The attitude of Italy is remarkable. If she can be induced to join with us, the Austrian Fleet would be powerless and the Mediterranean as safe as an English lake. Surely some effort should be made to encourage Italy to come forward. From leaving an alliance to declaring war is only a step." The Foreign Secretary replied in writing, "I will neglect no opportunity."

March 1 : The Second Greek Offer.

Most important of all were the effects upon Greece. We have seen how on February 11 M. Venizelos, in spite of his friendship for the Allies and his deep desire to join them, had refused to be drawn into the war by the futile offer of a British and French division. But the attack on the Dardanelles produced an immediate change. On March 1 the British Minister in Athens telegraphed that M. Venizelos had put forward a proposal that a Greek army corps of three divisions should be sent to Gallipoli. Sir Edward Grey promptly replied that H.M. Government would gladly accept this aid, and added that the Admiralty were very anxious that the Greeks should assist with ships as well as troops in the Dardanelles. The British Minister replied on March 2 : " M. Venizelos hopes to be in a position to make us a definite offer to-morrow. . . . He had already approached the King, who," added the Minister, " I learn from another source, is in favour of war."

On the 3rd the British Military Attaché at Athens telegraphed that " The view of the Greek General Staff was universally that the naval attack should be assisted by land operations. Their plan was to disembark four or five Greek divisions at the Southern extremity of the Peninsula and to advance against the heights East of Maidos. Three successive defended positions would have to be carried, but Turks could not develop large forces owing to lack of space for deployment. If simultaneously an attack by a separate and sufficient force was made against lines of Bulair, either by disembarking troops North of [the] lines or at head of Gulf of Xeros, the Turks would have to abandon the Maidos region or run risk of being cut off."

Thus at this moment we had within our reach or on the way not only the Australasian Army Corps and all the other troops in Egypt, the Royal Naval Division, and a French Division, we had also at least a Greek army corps of three divisions and possibly more, while a Russian army corps was assembling at Batoum. It would have been quite easy, in addition, to have sent the 29th Division and one or two Territorial divisions from England. There was surely a reasonable prospect that with all these forces playing their respective parts in a general scheme, the Gallipoli Peninsula could even now have been seized and Constantinople taken before the end of April. Behind all lay Bulgaria and Roumania, determined not to be left out of the fall of Constantinople and the collapse of the Turkish Empire. One step more, one effort more—and Constantinople was in our hands and all the Balkan States committed to irrevocable hostility to the Central Powers.

One must pause, and with the tragic knowledge of after days dwell upon this astounding situation which had been produced swiftly, easily, surely, by a comparatively small naval enterprise directed at a vital nerve-centre of the world.

Disastrous Character of Russian Action.

But now a terrible fatality intervened. Russia—failing, reeling backward under the German hammer, with her munitions running short, cut off from her allies—Russia was the Power which ruptured irretrievably this brilliant and decisive combination. On March 3 the Russian Foreign Minister informed our Ambassador that—

" The Russian Government could not consent to Greece participating in operations in the Dardanelles, as it would be sure to lead to complications." . . .

" The Emperor," M. Sazonoff added, " had in an audience with him yesterday, declared he could not in any circumstances consent to Greek co-operation in the Dardanelles." This was a hard saying. Was there no finger to write upon the wall, was there no ancestral spirit to conjure up before this unfortunate Prince, the downfall of his House, the ruin of his people—the bloody cellar of Ekaterinburg ?

King Constantine Rebuffed.

In Athens the Russian Minister, under orders from his Government, was active to discourage and resist the Greek intervention. In particular, the King of Greece was made aware that in no circumstances would he be allowed to

Photo : Imperial War Museum.

AFTER THE BOMBARDMENT AT CAPE HELLES.

A 9·4 inch gun employed by the Turks at Cape Helles dismounted and put out of action by a direct hit from one of the *Queen Elizabeth's* guns. In the background are all that remained of the Turkish barracks.

enter Constantinople with his troops. Other suggestions were made, that perhaps one Greek division might be allowed to participate, " this having the advantage that the King could not take the field in person." Can one wonder that, with his German consort and German leanings, with every appeal on the one hand and this violent rebuff upon the other, King Constantine was thrown back, and relapsed into his previous attitude of hostile reserve ?

Further advices from the French Foreign Office on March 4 stated :—

" The Russian Government would not at any price accept the co-operation of Greece in Constantinople expedition. . . . If the Greek Government offer co-operation in the Dardanelles expedition they should be told that co-operation of Greece in the war must be entire and she must give active support to Serbia."

Our Minister at Athens, the well-informed and vigilant Elliot, left us in no doubt of the Greek position.

" To insist on Greek support of Serbia," he telegraphed on the 6th, " except in the event of a Bulgarian attack, would be to wreck the prospect of Greek co-operation with us. The Prime Minister himself had been convinced by the arguments of the General Staff as to the strategical danger of such an operation."

The British Military Attaché telegraphed on the 6th :—

" My Russian colleague told me to-day that he thought Russia would object to presence of King of Greece in Constantinople, and might make a stipulation that he did not come, a condition of acceptance of the present Greek offer. Any such restriction might lead to collapse of the whole proposal. I urged him to represent to Russian

General Staff the strategic advantages of the proposal. Entry of Greece into the war would give best guarantee of succouring Serbia if again attacked by Austria, and maintenance of Greek forces intact would have initially a deterrent effect upon Bulgaria, which in turn might set Roumania free to co-operate with Russia in Bukovina. The French would benefit by securing Corfu as a naval base for the Adriatic, and a general movement in favour of the Triple Entente would be set going in the Balkans.

"The King," he added, "will not initially accompany force, but when Constantinople is approached he may alter his mind. If so, it is conceivable that the King of the Bulgarians might like to anticipate him by co-operating against the Turkish Army—which might have decisive results.

"Russia's objection to temporary presence of either King would be then most unfortunate.

"M. Venizelos," he concluded, "received a great ovation in procession to-day, but main reason for popularity of his proposal to join us, is the hope of Greek troops reaching Constantinople."

Feeling this situation as I did, in every nerve of my body, I was acutely distressed. The time-honoured quotation one learnt as a schoolboy—"*Quos Deus vult perdere prius dementat*"—resounded in all its deep significance now that conditions as tragic and fate-laden as those of ancient Rome had again descended upon the world. This was, indeed, the kind of situation for which such terrible sentences had been framed—perhaps it was for this very situation that this sentence had been prophetically reserved.

Resignation of M. Venizelos.

In my distress I wrote, late on the night of the 6th, to Sir Edward Grey.

Mr. Churchill to Sir Edward Grey.

March 6, 1915.

I beseech you at this crisis not to make a mistake in falling below the level of events. Half-hearted measures will ruin all, and a million men will die through the prolongation of the war. You must be bold and violent. You have a right to be. Our fleet is forcing the Dardanelles. No armies can reach Constantinople but those which we invite, yet we seek nothing here but the victory of the common cause.

Tell the Russians that we will meet them in a generous and sympathetic spirit about Constantinople. But no impediment must be placed in the way of Greek co-operation. We must have Greece and Bulgaria, if they will come, I am so afraid of your losing Greece. and yet paying all the future into Russian hands. If Russia prevents Greece helping, I will do my utmost to oppose her having Constantinople. She is a broken power but for our aid, and has no resource open but to turn traitor—and this she cannot do.

If you don't back up *this* Greece—the Greece of Venizelos—you will have another which will cleave to Germany.

I put this letter aside till the next morning, and in the morning there arrived the following laconic telegram from Athens :—

"The King, having refused to agree to M. Venizelos' proposals, the Cabinet have resigned."

I put my letter away unsent, and print it now not in any reproach of Sir Edward Grey or the Foreign Office. They felt as we did. They did all in their power. But I print it because it registers a terrible moment in the long struggle to save Russia from her foes and from herself.

CHAPTER XLI

THE NEW RESOLVE

Increasing Difficulties—Fire of the *Queen Elizabeth*—Attacks of March 7 to 12—Sir Ian Hamilton appointed C.-in-C.—Written Instructions to Sir Ian Hamilton—Increasing Desire for Military Action—Lord Kitchener's Decision—The Opportunity for Reviewing the Whole Position—A Chance to Break off before Further Commitment—General Wish for Resolute Action—Admiralty Telegram to Vice-Admiral Carden—Admiral Carden's Illness—Admiral de Robeck—The Eve of March 18.

WHILE the attention of so many States, great and small, was riveted upon the Dardanelles, and while so many profound and far-reaching reactions were occurring over the whole field of the war, the naval operations which had produced these great effects began to falter and to flag.

Increasing Difficulties.

From March 3 onwards the progress of Admiral Carden's attack became continually slower. The weather was frequently unsuitable to long-range firing, our seaplanes in those early days were neither numerous nor very efficient, the co-ordination of the gunnery and the observation, though based on sound principles, was in practice primitive through lack of experience. The mobile howitzers which began to fire in larger numbers each day from both sides of the Straits harassed the bombarding ships and forced them to keep on the move. Landing parties sent ashore on March 4 met with much stiffer resistance, and failed to reach the forts. The attempts to sweep up the minefields encountered considerable and increasing Turkish fire from field guns well directed by searchlights. The mine-sweeping trawlers which had been provided for this service proved inadequate for so severe a task. The ordeal was very trying to their erstwhile civilian personnel who, though familiar with mines, had never previously encountered artillery fire.

Three separate and successive bombardments were made between March 2 and March 8 upon the Turkish forts constituting the inner defences of the Dardanelles.

First, on the 2nd and 3rd the *Canopus*, *Swiftsure*, *Cornwallis*, *Albion*, *Triumph* and *Prince George* at different times bombarded various forts, Fort Dardanos (8) receiving the main fire. The forts were silenced, but as the ships were kept moving sometimes in circles by the howitzer fire, no guns were hit. Altogether 121 12-inch shells were fired. No definite conclusions could be formed as to the effect of the fire, but the expenditure of ammunition was considered serious.

Fire of the *Queen Elizabeth*.

The method was now changed. On March 5 the *Queen Elizabeth* began the indirect bombardment of the forts at the Narrows. She was stationed outside the Straits two miles from Gaba Tepe and fired across the peninsula. During the day thirty-three 15-inch shells were fired, twenty-eight at Fort 13 and five at Fort 17. Everything depended upon the arrangements for spotting the fall of the shots. This was provided so far as possible by three seaplanes and by three battleships (*Irresistible*, *Canopus* and *Cornwallis*) manœuvring inside the Straits at right angles to the line of fire. Spotting for elevation by the ships was comparatively easy, but they were from their position unable to spot for direction. This depended upon the seaplanes, and for

After the painting by W. L. Wyllie, R.A.

SPOTTING FOR THE FLEET: DARDANELLES.

This spirited picture, showing a seaplane engaged in spotting and reporting results of the gunfire of the British Fleet at the Dardanelles, was painted by the late W. L. Wyllie, R.A., the distinguished painter of sea pictures. It is reproduced here by permission kindly granted by the artist's widow.

this all-important purpose our seaplane force was found inadequate. The first machine sent up crashed owing to the propeller bursting at 3,000 feet. The second machine was forced to descend after being hit six times by rifle bullets and the pilot wounded. The third machine gave one correction only.

The indirect bombardment was continued on March 6. By this time the Turks had brought up small guns and howitzers on the Gallipoli Peninsula which fired upon the *Queen Elizabeth* causing her to increase her range to 20,000 yards. The old Turkish battleship *Barbarossa* also opened fire upon her with her 11-inch guns from inside the Straits of Maidos. None of our ships was damaged, although all were hit on several occasions by the howitzers and field guns.

The results of the firing are now known to be as follows:—Fort 13 was hit eleven times and Fort 17 about seven times. The barracks in rear of both these forts were destroyed and one magazine was hit. No guns were damaged, but the firing, coming from an unprotected angle, had a disturbing effect on the Turkish guns' crews. Had aeroplane observation been possible, there is little doubt that great damage would have been done to the forts, and with a sufficient expenditure of ammunition every gun might have been smashed. The forts were quite unprotected from this direction, and each gun and mounting presented a maximum target.

The instruction contained in the original Admiralty orders about the sparing use of ammunition and the inadequate arrangements for observation from the air led to a premature discontinuance of this form of attack. This was a great pity. The long-range bombardment by the *Queen Elizabeth* was one of the prime features in the naval plan. Good supplies of ammunition were available for the 15-inch guns, but the Admiralty did not give permission to draw upon these till after March 18. The rule about economy therefore stood. It would have been possible in a few weeks to reinforce and improve the aerial spotting, and this was, in fact, done. The principle underlying the use of the *Queen Elizabeth* against the forts, as embodied in the original Admiralty plan, was sound. The failure was due to the restriction on the expenditure of ammunition and to the inadequate aerial observation. Both these were subsequently remedied, but meanwhile the method had itself been precipitately condemned and was never resumed.

Attacks of March 7 to 12.

The attack by indirect fire being assumed to have failed, direct attacks upon the forts at the Narrows were resumed on March 7 by the *Agamemnon* and *Lord Nelson* at ranges of from 12,000 to 13,000 yards. The French squadron also engaged Forts 7 and 8. The day was inconclusive. On the 8th the *Queen Elizabeth*, aided by the *Canopus*, *Cornwallis* and *Irresistible*, renewed the attack. The light was bad owing to rain squalls, and low clouds prevented seaplane observation. All the ships came under the usual howitzer fire, which however did them no serious harm. The forts were apparently silenced, but the Turks claim that they were reserving their ammunition for shorter ranges, and that they ceased firing to clear the guns of grit and débris thrown up by the exploded shells in their vicinity.

The operations continued till the 12th with fitful bombardments and tentative attempts to sweep the mine-fields. During these days I began to doubt whether there was sufficient determination behind the attack. In one of his telegrams, for instance, the Admiral reported that the mine-sweepers had been driven back by heavy fire which, he added, had caused no casualties. Considering what was happening on the Western Front and the desperate tasks and fearful losses which were accepted almost daily by the allied troops, I could not but feel disquieted by an observation of this kind. In further telegrams the Admiral explained the difficulties, and that he was reorganizing his mine-sweeping service with regular naval personnel. This reorganisation was not, however, complete

until a much later period in the operations. Meanwhile, although several further determined attempts were made, happily not attended by heavy losses, the minefields remained substantially intact.

It was clear that a much more vehement effort must be made.

* * * *

Sir Ian Hamilton appointed C.-in-C.

The appointment of a military Commander-in-Chief for the forces assembling in the Eastern Mediterranean and his dispatch to the scene of operations was long overdue. By the end of the first week in March Lord Kitchener had virtually decided to select Sir Ian Hamilton, who was at that time in command of the Central Force at home. He did not, however, reveal his purpose to this officer until the morning of the 12th, when he sent for him and observed laconically: "We are sending a military force to support the Fleet now at the Dardanelles, and you are to have command."[1]

Waiting for this decision, delayed without reason day after day, while troops and events were swiftly moving forward, had been very trying to me and to Lord Fisher. The concentration of transports had been timed for the 18th, and a host of intricate and imperious questions connected with the feeding, watering and organization of large numbers of men and animals were impending at Mudros. The French Division was also on the sea and looking to us for directions and arrangements. All questions of the use of the troops were additional to these administrative problems. On the other hand, Lord Kitchener showed himself restive under repeated inquiries, and was prompt to resent anything that looked like pressure or forcing his hand. We were anxious to have whatever troops he would send on the spot as soon as possible, and great tact was necessary. It was not until the 11th that I was sure he had decided upon Sir Ian Hamilton. I immediately ordered a special train for the afternoon of the 12th in case it should be wanted.

[1] Sir Ian Hamilton: *Gallipoli Diary*, p. 2.

Written Instructions to Sir Ian Hamilton.

The following were the salient points from Lord Kitchener's written instructions to Sir Ian Hamilton:—

"(1) The Fleet have undertaken to force the passage of the Dardanelles. The employment of military forces on any large scale for land operations at this juncture is only contemplated in the event of the Fleet failing to get through after every effort has been exhausted.

"(2) Before any serious undertaking is carried out in the Gallipoli Peninsula, all the British military forces detailed for the expedition should be assembled so that their full weight can be thrown in.

"(3) Having entered on the project of forcing the Straits, there can be no idea of abandoning the scheme. It will require time, patience and methodical plans of co-operation between the naval and military commanders. The essential point is to avoid a check which will jeopardize our chances of strategical and political success.

"(4) This does not preclude the probability of minor operations being engaged upon to clear areas occupied by the Turks with guns annoying the Fleet or for demolition of forts already silenced by the Fleet. But such minor operations should be as much as possible restricted to the forces necessary to achieve the object in view, and should as far as practicable not entail permanent occupation of positions on the Gallipoli Peninsula."

Whatever military criticisms may be levelled at these instructions, they represented fairly all that had been settled by the War Council up to that moment. With these instructions in his pocket, and accompanied by a small group of Staff officers appointed during the preceding day, and now meeting for the first time, Sir Ian Hamilton left Charing Cross for the Dardanelles on the evening of March 13. The thirty-knot light cruiser, *Phaeton*, awaited him under steam at Marseilles and carried him at full speed to the Dardanelles by the morning of the 17th.

* * * *

Increasing Desire for Military Action.

The increasing perplexities of the naval attack and the surprising ease with which the small parties of Marines had been landed at the end of February upon the Peninsula made the immediate employment of troops very tempting both at the Admiralty and on the spot. It was difficult to judge the prospects of a military landing at this juncture. No one knew what troops the Turks had on the spot. Vice-Admiral Carden had stated in his telegram of February 23 that "the garrison of the Gallipoli Peninsula is about 40,000 men." This was also the working basis assumed by the War Office.

We now know that the force actually in the Peninsula at this date was under 20,000, scattered along the coast in small parties without supports or reserves. It seems probable that if the 29th Division had been on the spot in fighting order, it could have been landed, with whatever troops were sent from Egypt, at this period without severe loss, and could have occupied very important and probably decisive positions. Thereafter the force landed would have had to sustain heavy and increasing Turkish attack. But there is no reason why they should not have held their ground, and they could have been continually reinforced from Egypt, and later from England, at a far greater rate than the enemy.

The possession of the vital observation-point of Achi Baba would have enabled the indirect naval fire to be directed with the utmost accuracy upon the forts at the Narrows. Heavy guns and howitzers, including our new 15-inch howitzers, could also have been landed and brought into action against them at effective ranges. In these circumstances the destruction of the forts within a reasonable time was certain, and the passage of the fleet into the Marmora must have followed. The use of troops on this scale would

Photo: E.N.A.

WAITING FOR THE ALLIED FLEETS.

One of the heavy Turkish guns manned and ready for action at the entrance to the Straits. The Turkish batteries defending the Dardanelles were fully equal to the task of inflicting serious damage upon the attacking ships, but their weakness lay, as is explained in the text, in a shortage of ammunition. Had the attack upon the forts been persisted in for even two more days the defenders would have been unable to make any reply.

Photo: Copyright.

THE BURNING VILLAGE OF KUM KALE.

During the bombardment of March 4, 1915, the village and fort at Kum Kale, on the Asiatic shore of the Dardanelles, were set on fire as a result of effective shooting by the naval guns. The Turks retired from this point and landing parties were sent ashore. The ancient city of Troy stood at a point directly beyond the darker smoke seen in the centre of the picture.

however have involved a new and serious decision. It meant nothing less than beginning a new campaign, and this would have had to be balanced against further perseverance in the purely naval attack which had not yet been pressed to any conclusion.

Lord Kitchener's Decision.

I thought it right, without pronouncing an opinion myself, to ask Lord Kitchener for a formal statement of the War Office view. His reply was only what I expected.

First Lord. *March* 13, 1915.

In answer to your question, unless it is found that our estimate of the Ottoman strength on the Gallipoli Peninsula is exaggerated and the position on the Kilid Bahr Plateau less strong than anticipated, no operations on a large scale should be attempted until the 29th Division has arrived and is ready to take part in what is likely to prove a difficult undertaking, in which severe fighting must be anticipated.

K.

I do not criticize this decision. It seemed the wisest open in the circumstances. The error lay earlier. Had the 29th Division been sent as originally decided from February 22 onwards, it would have reached the scene by the middle of March instead of three weeks later. Had it been packed on the transports in order of battle, it would have gone into action within a few days of its arrival. All the other troops allocated to this theatre were either conveyed to Lemnos from England or France or were waiting with transports alongside at Alexandria by March 17 or 18. From the 20th onwards they were all available (so far as sea transport was concerned) for an operation upon the Gallipoli Peninsula. The concentration of all troops allotted, including the French Division, was effected as promised by the Admiralty punctually to the date named, namely, March 17. The naval attack reached its culminating point on the 18th. No large Turkish reinforcements had yet reached the Peninsula. But without the 29th Division, the army could do nothing. This was the vital *key* division, the sole regular division, whose movements and arrival governed

everything. Therefore four-fifths of the force assigned to this theatre were concentrated punctually as arranged, and the indispensable remaining fifth, without which they could not act, was three weeks behind them. Thus they were all rendered useless.

* * * *

The Opportunity for Reviewing the Whole Position.

By the middle of March we had therefore reached a turning point not only in the naval operations but in the whole enterprise. Hitherto no serious risks have been run, no losses have been sustained, and no important forces deeply engaged. The original Carden plan of gradual piecemeal reduction has been pursued. It has not failed, but it has lagged, and it is now so feebly pressed as almost to be at a standstill. Meanwhile, time is passing. Nearly a month has gone since we opened fire. What are the Turks doing? Clearly they must be reinforcing, fortifying, laying new mines, erecting new torpedo-tubes, mounting new guns under the organizing energy of their German instructors. What have the Germans themselves been doing? It would probably take about a month to send submarines from the Elbe to the Ægean. Have they been sent? Are they on their way? How far off are they? *They may be very near.* This was a rapidly growing anxiety. It was also a spur.

Surely now the moment has been reached to review the whole position and policy. Surely this is the very moment foreseen from the beginning when, "if matters did not go as we hoped, if the resistance of the forts proved too strong," we could, if we chose, break off the operation. Observe we could, in fact, do it in a moment. One gesture with the wand, and the whole armada assembled at the Dardanelles, or moving thither—battleships, cruisers, destroyers, trawlers, supply ships, transports—would melt and vanish away. Evening would close on a mighty Navy engaged in a world-arresting attack; and the sun might rise on empty seas and silent shores.

A Chance to Break off before Further Commitment.

Further, was not this the moment to consider alternatives. The prolonged bombardment of the Dardanelles had assuredly drawn continually increasing Turkish forces to the Gallipoli Peninsula and the Asiatic shore. Guns, ammunition supplies of every kind, with which the Turks were so ill-provided, had been scraped and dragged from every other point, or were on the move. Moreover, the Russians had by a brilliant effort, largely restored the situation in the Caucasus. The British and French troops now on the sea might not be strong enough to land and storm the plateaus and ridges of Gallipoli. But no one could doubt their ability to take and hold Alexandretta—thus cutting from the Turkish Empire one vast portion, severing the communications of their army threatening Egypt, and intercepting the stream of sorely needed supplies and food-stuffs from the East. For such a descent, the Dardanelles operations were the best of all preliminaries—a sincere feint.

On me these considerations made no impression. I knew them all and I rejected them all. I was unswervingly set upon the main enterprise. I believed that if we tried hard enough we could force the Dardanelles, and that if we succeeded in this a truly decisive victory would have been gained. But where were the admirals, generals and statesmen, who did not share these clear-cut conclusions, who had doubts—had always had doubts about the feasibility of the operation, about the margin of the Grand Fleet, about the utility of operations in the eastern theatre! Here surely was the time for them. Here surely was the time for Lord Fisher. He could say with perfect propriety and consistency, "We have given the Carden plan a good trial, I never liked it much. It has not come off: but it has been a very good demonstration; it has fooled the Turks; it has helped the Russians; it has cost us practically nothing—now let us break off altogether or turn to something else." Later on in April, when we were far more deeply committed, had suffered palpable loss and rebuff, and could not

withdraw without great injury to our war prestige, suggestions of this kind were indeed made. But now it was certainly an arguable policy to close the account, and in a naval sense it was the easiest thing in the world to do.

General Wish for Resolute Action.

But what happened? So far from wishing to break off the operation, the First Sea Lord was never at any time so resolute in its support. He assented willingly and cordially to the new decision which was now taken to change the gradual tentative limited-liability advance into a hard, determined and necessarily hazardous attack. He approved the momentous Admiralty telegrams which I now drafted after full discussions in our War Group, and, of course, with continuous reference to the Prime Minister. He even offered to go out and hoist his flag and take command at the Dardanelles himself, saying that the responsibility was so great that it could only be borne by the highest authority. Subsequently, although it greatly complicated his position, Lord Fisher himself informed the Dardanelles Commissioners of this fact in a very frank and chivalrous manner.

Photo: Elliott & Fry.

GENERAL SIR IAN HAMILTON.

The appointment of Sir Ian Hamilton to direct the military operations on the Gallipoli Peninsula was justified if past service and experience were allowed to count for anything. He entered the Army in 1873, and took part in practically every campaign in which the country was involved during the forty years prior to the Great War. The task set at Gallipoli bristled with difficulties, and if Hamilton failed it is open to question whether any other commander would have succeeded.

So far as the other responsible authorities cited in these pages were concerned, no sign of disagreement was manifested. Sir Arthur Wilson, Sir Henry Jackson, Admiral Oliver, Commodore de Bartolomé, all were united and agreed to press on and to press hard. The Ministers seemed equally decided. War Office and Foreign Office were eager and hopeful. The Prime Minister did not even think it necessary to summon a council and put the point to them. I have never concealed my opinion. I rejoiced to find so much agreement and force gathering behind the enterprise. My only complaint has been that

this high resolve was not carried through by all parties to a definite conclusion.

What was the explanation of this unity and resolution? The vision of victory had lighted the mental scene. The immense significance of the Dardanelles and of the city which lay beyond had possessed all minds. The whole combination which had been dispersed by Russia on March 6 was still latent. The attitude of Italy, of Bulgaria, of Roumania, of Greece absorbed attention. Everyone's blood was up. There was a virile readiness to do and dare. All the will-power and cohesion necessary to mount and launch a great operation by sea and land were now forthcoming. But alas, a month too late!

Admiralty Telegram to Vice-Admiral Carden.

On the Admiralty War Group all were agreed upon the following telegram to Admiral Carden:—

March 11, 1915, 1.35 p.m.

101. Your original instructions laid stress on caution and deliberate methods, and we approve highly the skill and patience with which you have advanced hitherto without loss.

The results to be gained are, however, great enough to justify loss of ships and men if success cannot be obtained without. The turning of the corner at Chanak may decide the whole operation and produce consequences of a decisive character upon the war, and we suggest for your consideration that a point has now been reached when it is necessary, choosing favourable weather conditions, to overwhelm the forts at the Narrows at decisive range by the fire of the largest number of guns, great and small, that can be brought to bear upon them...

We do not wish to hurry you or urge you beyond your judgment, but we recognise clearly that at a certain period in your operations you will have to press hard for a decision, and we desire to know whether you consider that point has now been reached. We shall support you in well-conceived action for forcing a decision, even if regrettable losses are entailed.

And on the 15th:—

109. We understand that it is your intention to sweep a good clear passage through the minefields to enable the forts at the Narrows eventually to be attacked at close range, and to cover this operation whether against the forts or [against] the light and movable armament, by whatever fire is necessary from the Battle Fleet, and that this task will probably take several days. After this is completed we understand you intend to engage the forts at the Narrows at decisive range and put them effectually out of action. You will then proceed again at your convenience with the attack on the forts beyond, and any further sweeping operations which may be necessary. If this is your intention, we cordially approve it. We wish it to be pressed forward without hurry, but without loss of time.

The Admiral replied:—

March 15, 1915, 9.15 a.m.

I fully appreciate the situation, and intend, as stated in my telegram of March 14, to vigorously attack fortresses at the Narrows, clearing minefields under cover of attack. Good visibility is essential, and I will take first favourable opportunity. . . .

These two Admiralty telegrams, 101 and 109, were very serious messages to send to the Fleet. They had the intention among other things of making the Admiral feel that if he made a determined effort to force the passage and suffered very heavy losses, or the whole operation miscarried, the responsibility would rest with his superiors at home. He had only to think of his task and of the enemy in his front.

* * * *

Admiral Carden's Illness.

Everything being settled for the attack, I took two days' holiday and went to Sir John French's Headquarters (where I was of course on the direct telephone) to await results. I had no sooner got there than I received a telegram from Vice-Admiral Carden to the Admiralty stating that he had been obliged to go on the sick list under decision of his Medical Officer. He recommended that the conduct of the operations should be entrusted to Vice-Admiral de Robeck who, he said, "was

well in touch with all the arrangements present and future, and has been of the greatest assistance in their preparation."

This was a disconcerting event. We had arrived at complete understanding with Vice-Admiral Carden. He was the responsible author of the gradual naval attack. He had declared himself in the fullest agreement with the adoption of a more vigorous method. He was deeply engaged in the business, and was bound to fight it through to a conclusion. Now on the eve of battle he had suddenly collapsed. We had to begin again with somebody else.

Admiral de Robeck.

I had become acquainted with Admiral de Robeck during the previous three years. He bore an exceptionally high reputation in the service. He was a good sea officer and a fine disciplinarian. Before the war he had served during my tenure for two years on the East Coast as Admiral of Patrols. I had not always agreed with the schemes which he made in this capacity for dealing with war problems. One could not feel that his training and experience up to this period had led him to think deeply on the larger aspects of strategy and tactics. His character, personality, and zeal inspired confidence in all. The course of events pointed to him as the proper successor of Admiral Carden. He was, it is true, junior in substantive rank to Rear-Admiral Wemyss, now commanding the base at Mudros; but he had been Second-in-Command throughout the operations and had all their threads in his hands. Wemyss also was deeply engaged in the administrative crisis caused by the hourly arrival of the transports containing the Army. To exchange these officers merely on grounds of seniority seemed clearly wrong.

Wemyss himself, with high public spirit spontaneously telegraphed: "I am quite prepared to act under the orders of de Robeck if you should think it desirable to promote him. De Robeck and I are in perfect accord and can loyally co-operate whichever way you decide." The decision was virtually inevitable. Thus carefully did Destiny pick her footsteps at the Dardanelles.

The Eve of March 18.

I deemed it indispensible to come to a complete understanding with Admiral de Robeck and to make sure once and for all that he was in full agreement with the Admiralty and ready to take up the operations from the point at which Vice-Admiral Carden had been forced to relinquish them. I therefore sent, after consulting Lord Fisher, the following telegram from Sir John French's Headquarters :—

Admiralty to Vice-Admiral de Robeck.

March 17, 1915.

Personal and Secret from First Lord.

In entrusting to you with great confidence the command of the Mediterranean Detached Fleet I presume you are in full accord with Admiralty telegram 101 and Admiralty telegram 109 and Vice-Admiral Carden's answers thereto, and that you consider, after separate and independent judgment, that the immediate operations proposed are wise and practicable. If not, do not hesitate to say so. If so, execute them without delay and without further reference at the first favourable opportunity. Report fully from day to day. Work in closest harmony with General Hamilton. Make any proposals you think fit for the subordinate commands. Wemyss is your second in command. All good fortune attend you.

Vice-Admiral de Robeck to Admiralty.

March 17, 1915, 10.20 a.m.

First Lord of Admiralty. Secret and Personal.

228. From Vice-Admiral de Robeck. Thank you for your telegram. I am in full agreement with telegrams mentioned. Operations will proceed to-morrow, weather permitting. My view is that everything depends on our ability to clear the minefields for forcing the Narrows, and this necessitates silencing the forts during the process of sweeping. Generals Hamilton and d'Amade and Admiral Wemyss have been on board to-day, and interview entirely satisfactory.

And the next day :—

March 18, 1915.

Weather fine. Operations about to begin.

CHAPTER XLII

THE EIGHTEENTH OF MARCH

The Plan of Attack—The Fatal Omission—The Action Begins—The Forts Dominated—The *Bouvet* Mined and Sunk—*Inflexible* and *Irresistible* Mined—The Attack Suspended—How I Spent March 18—General Resolve to Fight it Out—Admiral de Robeck's Telegram of March 23—Proposed Admiralty Order to Renew the Battle—The First Sea Lord's Refusal.

ON the morning of March 18 the whole Allied Fleet advanced to the attack of the Narrows.

The Plan of Attack.

Admiral de Robeck's plan was to silence simultaneously the forts which guarded the Narrows and the batteries protecting the minefields. Ten battleships were assigned to the attack and six to their relief at four-hour intervals. The attack was to be opened at long range by the four modern ships. When the forts were partially subdued the four ships of the French squadron were to pass through the intervals of first line and engage the forts at 8,000 yards. As soon as the forts were dominated the mine-sweepers were to clear a 900-yards channel through the five lines of mines constituting the Kephez minefield. The sweeping was to be continued throughout the night, covered by two battleships, while the rest of the Fleet withdrew.

The next morning, if the channel had been cleared, the Fleet would advance through it into Sari Siglar Bay, and batter the forts at the Narrows at short and decisive range. The sweeping of the minefields at the Narrows would follow the destruction or effective disablement of these forts.

The actual distribution of duties was as follows :—

Line A.	*Queen Elizabeth* *Agamemnon* *Lord Nelson* *Inflexible*	To fire at the forts at the Narrows at 14,000 yds.
	Triumph *Prince George*	To fire at the intermediate defences.
Line B.	*Suffren* *Bouvet* *Charlemagne* *Gaulois*	To fire later at the forts at the Narrows at 8,000 yards.
	Cornwallis *Canopus*	To cover the mine-sweeping during the night.
	Vengeance *Irresistible* *Albion* *Ocean* *Swiftsure* *Majestic*	Relief.

The Fatal Omission.

The foundation of the whole plan was that the battleships would only fight and manœuvre in waters which had been thoroughly swept and were known to be clear of mines. On March 7 the bombarding area had been found free and was, in fact, free from mines. Sweeping operations had been carried out almost every night up to 8,000 yards from the Narrows and a few sweeps had been made along the Asiatic shore. Eren Keui Bay had not, however, been swept to any large extent.

An experiment carried out by the *Ark Royal* had led to the belief that a seaplane or aeroplane flying above a minefield could discern mines at 18-feet depth in the clear water below. The seaplanes frequently reported the presence of mines in the regular minefields, and their reports had come to be relied upon not only in the positive sense that mines were in a certain place, but in the much wider and more questionable negative sense that there were no mines where none were reported.

We now know that the experiment

of the *Ark Royal* was misleading. The seaplanes could not, in fact, locate the regular Turkish minefields, and what they saw and reported were only mines exceptionally near the surface or submerged net buoys. Every allowance must be made for the difficulty of the task and for the limited means available for discharging it. But the operation of sweeping the areas from which the ships were to bombard, which were fully under our control and not at all to be confused with the strongly guarded regular minefields, was the indispensable preliminary to any naval attack upon the forts. This, as we now know, was not achieved because the sweepers were inadequate both in numbers and efficiency, and this fact led directly to the losses in the attack of March 18, and indirectly to the abandonment of the whole naval enterprise.

Photo: Vandyk.

ADMIRAL SIR JOHN DE ROBECK.

Appointed second in command to Sir Sackville Carden at the Dardanelles in 1915, Admiral de Robeck soon afterwards assumed command. He directed the naval operations against the Turks on March 18, 1915 and later was responsible for the naval side of the attack upon Gallipoli itself.

For in the early and squally dawn of March 8, while the British night patrol of destroyers was withdrawing from the Straits, the little Turkish steamer *Nousret* had laid a new line of twenty mines in Eren Keui Bay parallel to the shore and moored about 100 to 150 yards apart. These mines were intended to catch ships attempting to renew the bombardment from the positions in which they had worked on March 6 and 7. In fact, however, they played a recognizable part in the history of the Great War. Three of them were found and destroyed by the sweepers on March 16, but as no more were encountered it was not realized that they were part of a line of mines. There the rest lay during the ten days before the attack undetected and unsuspected. There they were now lying when in the brilliant sunshine of March 18 the tremendous armada assembled under Admiral de Robeck's command advanced majestically to the execution of a momentous plan.

The Action Begins.

At about half-past eleven the *Queen Elizabeth, Agamemnon, Lord Nelson* and *Inflexible* opened fire in succession on the forts at the Narrows at 14,400 yards range and a few minutes later the whole of Line A was in action. The ships were immediately subjected to a heavy fire from the movable howitzers and field guns of the Intermediate Defences. All ships were struck several times, but their armour effectually protected them from

After a painting by W. Malchin.

ONE FIFTY-FOUR P.M., MARCH 18, 1915.

The first disaster to befall the Allied fleet during the bombardment of March 18, 1915, at the Dardanelles occurred at 1.54 p.m., when the French ship *Bouvet*, coming out of the Straits, struck a mine in Eren Keui Bay. The picture shown above, after the painting of W. Malchin, shows the *Bouvet*, on the left, a few seconds after impact with the mine. In the centre is the French ship *Gaulois*, whilst the British *Agamemnon* is seen following behind.

damage. The forts also began to fire, but the range was too great for them.

At 11.50 a big explosion took place in Fort 20 on which the *Queen Elizabeth* was firing, and both the *Agamemnon* and *Lord Nelson* were seen to be hitting Forts 13 and 17 repeatedly. A few minutes after midday the French Squadron advanced through the bombarding line and, gallantly led by Admiral Guépratte, began to engage the forts at closer range. All the forts replied vigorously and the firing on both sides became tremendous, the whole of Lines A and B firing simultaneously both at the forts and at the lighter batteries.

The spectacle at this period is described as one of terrible magnificence. The mighty ships wheeling, manœuvring and firing their guns, great and small, amid fountains of water; the forts in clouds of dust and smoke pierced by enormous flashes; the roar of the cannonade reverberating back from the hills on each side of the Straits, both shores alive with the discharges of field guns; the attendant destroyers, the picket-boats darting hither and thither on their perilous service—all displayed under shining skies and upon calm blue water, combined to make an impression of inconceivable majesty and crisis.

The Forts Dominated.

This period lasted for about an hour. A little before 1 o'clock a great explosion occurred in Fort 13. A quarter of an hour later Fort 8 ceased firing. The *Gaulois* and the *Charlemagne* were now hitting Forts 13 and 16 with regularity. At half-past one the fire of the forts slackened appreciably. By a quarter to two their fire had almost ceased. Their men had been driven, or withdrawn, from the guns, and the whole interior of the works was obstructed with débris.

The mine-sweepers were now ordered to advance. The French Squadron which had borne the brunt was recalled and the battleships of the relief moved forward to take their places. Scarcely any damage had been done to the British

ships, though the *Inflexible* had her fore-bridge wrecked and on fire; and several of the French ships had been a good deal knocked about. In the whole fleet, however, not one vessel had been injured in its fighting or motive power. The crews, protected by the strong steel armour, had suffered scarcely any loss. Not forty men in all had been killed or wounded. So far the plan seemed to be working well. The general impression was that the forts were dominated and that, had there been no minefield, the ships could have steamed through the Straits, keeping the forts pinned down by their fire with little loss. It is certain at any rate, that we had the measure of the forts. But now the first of the disasters occurred.

The *Bouvet* Mined and Sunk.

At 1.54, as the *Bouvet* was coming out of the Straits, following her flagship, the *Suffren*, she struck one of the mines in Eren Keui Bay. The explosion fired her magazine and in two minutes she vanished beneath the surface in a cloud of smoke and steam, only 66 men being saved. The cause of her destruction was attributed on the *Queen Elizabeth* to a heavy shell, and the operations continued without a pause.[1]

At 2 o'clock the forts were completely silent and only the *Queen Elizabeth* and the *Lord Nelson* continued to fire at them. The mine-sweepers were now ordered to enter the Straits; and the relieving line of "B" battleships at the same time advanced to engage the forts at closer range. All the forts resumed a rapid but ineffective fire, and the *Queen Elizabeth* replied with salvos. This second phase also continued for over an hour, the forts firing spasmodically and without injuring the fleet. There is no doubt that at this time the Turkish fire control and communications were deranged. Meanwhile, the

[1] There is still doubt whether the *Bouvet* struck a mine, or whether a shell exploded her magazine. She was over the new minefield, and the Turks think he was destroyed by it.

Drawing: E.N.A.

THE LAST OF THE *BOUVET*.

As explained in the text the disaster to the *Bouvet* was attributed by observers on the *Queen Elizabeth* to a heavy shell. The Turks believe that she struck a mine. Whatever the cause, the explosion fired her magazine, and in two minutes she vanished below the surface in a cloud of smoke and steam, only sixty-six men being saved.

THE NAVAL ATTACK AT THE

Undeterred by the loss of the *Bouvet* the fleet continued to pound away at the Turkish forts. explosives descending upon the land defences. This great ship was capable of firing her salvoes silenced ; the batteries guarding the minefields were put to flight, and

mine-sweepers were advancing slowly against the current towards the Kephez minefield. On their way they exploded three and fished up three more of the newly laid mines in Eren Keui Bay. It was of this moment in the action that Admiral de Robeck subsequently reported, "At 4 p.m. the forts of the Narrows were practically silenced ; the batteries guarding the minefields were put to flight, and the situation appeared to be most favourable for clearing the minefields."

Inflexible and *Irresistible* Mined.

At 4.11 the *Inflexible,* which all day had been lying in or close to the unknown minefield, reported she had struck a mine. She took a serious list and her condition was evidently one of danger. Three minutes later it was seen that the *Irresistible* had also listed and was apparently unable to move. At 4.50 Admiral de Robeck learned for certain that this ship also had struck a mine.

The appearance of these mines in water which it had been confidently believed was entirely free from them, and in which the fleet had been manœuvring all day, was profoundly disconcerting. It was not thought possible at this time that a line of moored mines could have been laid in our own waters, nor was this known till the end of the war. What then was the mysterious and terrific agency which had struck these deadly blows ? Was it torpedoes fired from some concealed or submerged station on the shore ? Was it a great shoal of floating mines thrown overboard by the Turks above the Narrows and only now carried by the current among the fleet ? Several such mines were seen drifting down during the afternoon, and had been grappled with by the hardy picket-boats. Moreover, just before the beginning of the action four Turkish steamers had been seen waiting in the Narrows, presumably to discharge cargoes of mines at the proper moment.[1] This was therefore the more probable explanation. But anyhow, it was obvious that the area in which the ships were working was not free from mines, or that some other even more alarming cause was active.

The Attack Suspended.

On this, Admiral de Robeck deter-

[1] There was in fact one ship for that purpose.

)ARDANELLES CONTINUES. *Drawing: Norman Wilkinson.*

he *Queen Elizabeth* hurled salvo after salvo, each of which meant some seven tons of metal and t the rate of about two each minute. By 4 p.m. the forts of the Narrows were practically ne situation appeared to be most favourable for clearing the minefields.

mined to break off the action. No one can accuse this decision. It was impossible to continue the attack on the forts in the face of such losses and uncertainty. The two battleships which were to have covered the sweeping operations during the night could not be left in the Straits. Moreover, the Intermediate Forts (7 and 8) were not yet controlled. The sweeping operations could not therefore proceed and the whole operation must be interrupted. About 5 o'clock orders were given for a general retirement, and all attention was concentrated on the wounded ships and the saving of their crews. While going to the aid of the *Irresistible* the *Ocean* ran into the same minefield and was also stricken. The rest of the story is soon told. The *Inflexible* reached Tenedos Island safely and was anchored in shallow water. The crews of the *Irresistible* and *Ocean* were taken off in destroyers which were most skilfully and courageously handled, and both these derelict battleships foundered during the night in the depths of the Straits.

This ended the action of March 18. For all the tremendous firing and prodigious aspect of the battle, the bloodshed on both sides was incredibly small. The Turkish lost less than 150 men in their batteries and forts, and in the whole British Fleet only 61 men were killed and wounded. The French, however, had to mourn the crew of the *Bouvet*, of whom nearly 600 perished. Of the ships, the *Inflexible* was put out of action for six weeks; the *Gaulois* had been severely injured by gunfire; and three of the old battleships had been sunk. We shall see later on what was the condition of the enemy and his defences.

* * * *

How I Spent March 18.

I passed the day of the 18th in the French trenches among the sand-dunes of the Belgian coast. Here the snarling lines which stretched from Switzerland touched the sea, and the barbed wire ran down the beach into salt water. Corpses entangled in the wire were covered with seaweed and washed by the tides as they mouldered. Others in groups of ten or twelve lay at the foot of the sandhills blasted in their charge, but with the sense and aspect

of attack still eloquent in their attitude and order. These dead had lain there for months, and the sand gradually gained upon them, softening their outlines. It was as if Nature was gathering them to herself. The lines were very close together, and in places only a few yards apart. A vigilant silence reigned, broken by occasional guns. The defences in the sand were complicated and novel. They presented features I had not seen on any other part of the front. It was fine weather, and I was thankful to keep my mind from dwelling on the events that I knew were taking place on the other sea flank of the hostile line. I returned to England during the night of the 18th in order to receive the account of the action.

It reached me in the morning, and at the first glance one could see that no good result had been achieved.

A later message added :—

> With the exception of ships lost and damaged, squadron is ready for immediate action, but the plan of attack must be reconsidered and means found to deal with floating mines.

Photo: Cribb.

H.M.S. *INFLEXIBLE.*

Launched in 1908 this battle-cruiser belonged to the *Invincible* class. She had a speed of twenty-five knots and mounted eight 12-inch and sixteen 4-inch guns. She was present at the battle of the Falkland Islands (*see* pp. 413 and 414), and, although damaged by a mine at the Dardanelles, she reached Tenedos Island without further mishap and survived to fight at Jutland.

General Resolve to Fight it Out.

I regarded this news only as the results of the first day's fighting. It never occurred to me for a moment that we should not go on within the limits of what we had decided to risk, until we reached a decision one way or the other. I found Lord Fisher and Sir Arthur Wilson in the same mood. Both met me together that morning with expressions of firm determination to fight it out. The First Sea Lord immediately ordered two battleships, the *London* and *Prince of Wales*, to reinforce Admiral de Robeck's fleet and to replace casualties, in addition to the *Queen* and *Implacable* which were already on their

Photo: E.N.A.

THE WRECK OF THE *IRRESISTIBLE*.

The third disaster to the Allied fleet on March 18, concerned the British ship *Irresistible*. Three minutes after the *Invincible* struck a mine, at 4.14 p.m. the *Irresistible* met with a like disaster. Less fortunate than *Invincible* she listed heavily, and it became necessary to rescue her crew. She is seen here, derelict, some hours before foundering in the waters of the Straits.

way. The French Minister of Marine telegraphed that he was sending the *Henri IV* to replace the *Bouvet*. We all repaired to the War Council which met at 11 o'clock. The War Council was also quite steady and determined, and after hearing our news authorized "The First Lord of the Admiralty to inform Vice-Admiral de Robeck that he could continue the naval operations against the Dardanelles if he thought fit."

On this we sent a telegram of encouragement to Admiral de Robeck, apprising him of the ships coming to reinforce him. We added :—

It appears important not to let the forts be repaired, or to encourage enemy by an apparent suspension of the operations. Ample supplies of 15-inch ammunition are available for indirect fire of *Queen Elizabeth* across the peninsula.

On the 20th Admiral de Robeck telegraphed to the Admiralty the details of the reorganization of the mine-sweeping which he was putting into effect. He hoped, he said, to be in a position to renew operations in three or four days; the necessity of some preliminary practice for the new mine-sweeper crews and for the destroyers had imposed an inevitable delay. No ship was to enter the Dardanelles unless everything was in readiness for a sustained attack.

Later in the day he telegraphed that the fighting efficiency of his surviving ships was unimpaired, the damage being confined to funnels, superstructure, and decks.

Thus everything was so far steady and resolved. The First Sea Lord and the Admiralty War Group, the Prime Minister and the War Council, the French Ministry of Marine, Admiral de Robeck and the French Admiral on the spot—all had no other idea but to persevere in accordance with the solemn decisions which had been taken.

Admiral de Robeck's Telegram of March 23.

But now suddenly on the 23rd came a telegram of a totally different character.

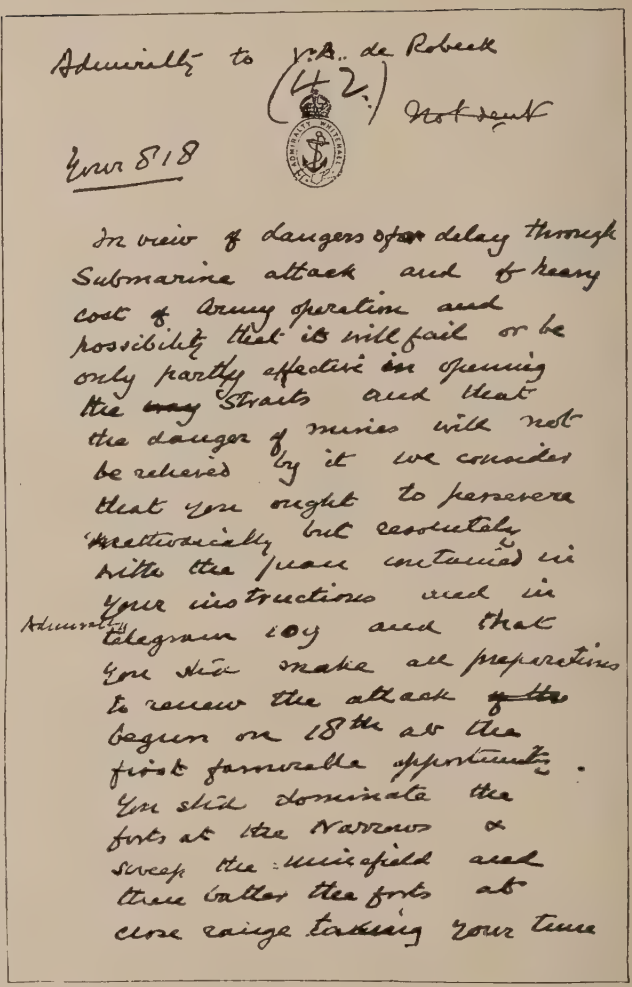
Vice-Admiral de Robeck to Admiralty.

March 23, 1915 (*Received* 6.30 a.m.)

818. At meeting to-day with Generals Hamilton and Birdwood the former

told me Army will not be in a position to undertake any military operations before 14th April. In order to maintain our communications when the fleet penetrates into the Sea of Marmora it is necessary to destroy all guns of position guarding the Straits. These are numerous, and only small percentage can be rendered useless by gunfire. The landing of demolishing party on the 26th February evidently surprised enemy. From our experience on the 4th March it seems in future destruction of guns will have to be carried out in face of strenuous and well-prepared opposition.

I do not think it a practicable operation to land a force adequate to undertake this service inside Dardanelles. General Hamilton concurs in this opinion. If the guns are not destroyed, any success of fleet may be nullified by the Straits closing up after the ships have passed through, and as loss of *matériel* will possibly be heavy, ships may not be available to keep Dardanelles open. The mine menace will continue until the Sea of Marmora is reached, being much greater than was anticipated. It must be carefully and thoroughly dealt with, both as regards mines and floating mines. This will take time to accomplish, but our arrangements will be ready by the time Army can act. It appears better to prepare a decisive effort about the middle of April rather than risk a great deal for what may possibly be only a partial solution.



Admiralty to V.A. de Robeck (42) Most Secret

Your 818

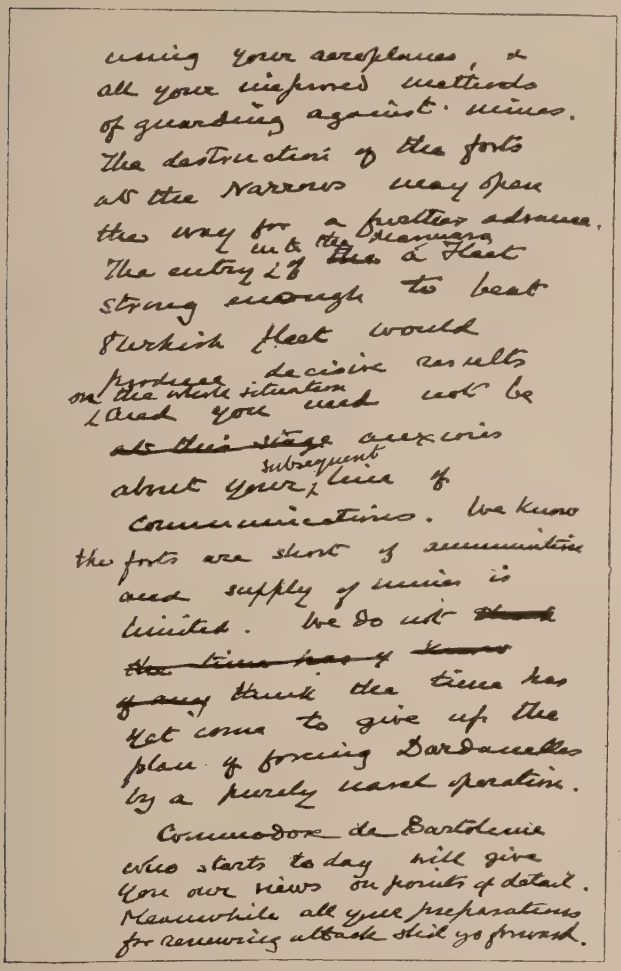
In view of dangers of delay through Submarine attack and of heavy cost of Army operation and possibility that it will fail or be only partly effective in opening the Straits and that the danger of mines will not be relieved by it we consider that you ought to persevere methodically but resolutely with the plan contained in your instructions and in Admiralty telegram 109 and that you should make all preparations to renew the attack as begun on 18th at the first favourable opportunity. You should dominate the forts at the Narrows & sweep the minefield and then bottle the forts at close range taking your time

ADMIRALTY MINUTE TO VICE-ADMIRAL DE ROBECK (1).

Facsimile of the First Lord's Minute prepared for submission to the Admiralty War Group on March 23, 1915.

Proposed Admiralty Order to Renew the Battle.

I read this telegram with consternation. I feared the perils of the long delay; I feared still more the immense and incalculable extension of the enterprise involved in making a military attack on a large scale. The mere process of landing an army after giving the enemy at least three weeks' additional notice seemed to me to be a most terrible and formidable hazard. It appeared to me at the time a far graver matter in every way than the naval attack. More-



using your aeroplanes & all your improved methods of guarding against mines. The destruction of the forts at the Narrows may open the way for a further advance, & the entry of the Fleet into the Sea of Marmora strong enough to beat Turkish fleet would produce decisive results on the whole situation. And you need not be at this stage anxious about your subsequent lines of communications. We know the forts are short of ammunition and supply of mines is limited. We do not ~~think~~ ~~the time has~~ ~~known~~ of any think the time has yet come to give up the plan of forcing Dardanelles by a purely naval operation.

Commodore de Bartolomé who starts to day will give you our views on points of detail. Meanwhile all your preparations for renewing attack shd go forward.

ADMIRALTY MINUTE TO VICE-ADMIRAL DE ROBECK (2).

Facsimile of the second page of the First Lord's Minute. The Minute is included in the text on pp. 621–622.

over, what justification was there for abandoning the naval plan on which hitherto all our reasoning and conclusions had been based? The loss of life in the naval operations had been very small. In the whole operation only one ship of any importance (the *Inflexible*) had been damaged, and a month or six weeks in the dockyard at Malta would repair her thoroughly. As for the old battleships, they were doomed in any case to the scrap-heap.

Every ship lost was being replaced. Only on the 20th the Admiral had telegraphed: "From experience gained on 18th I consider forts at the Narrows and the batteries guarding minefields can be dominated after a few days' engagement sufficient to enable mine-sweepers to clear Kephez minefields." But, if so, why not do this? It was what we had always meant to do. It was what we had decided to do. Why turn and change at this fateful hour and impose upon the army an ordeal of incalculable severity? An attack by the army if it failed would commit us irrevocably in a way no naval attack could have done. The risk was greater; the stakes were far higher. I had no doubt whatever what orders should be sent to Admiral de Robeck. I convened an immediate meeting of the Admiralty War Group, and placed the following before them:—

Admiralty to Vice-Admiral de Robeck.

Your 818. In view of the dangers of delay through submarine attack and of heavy cost of army operation, and possibility that it will fail or be only partly effective in opening the Straits, and that the dangers of mines will not be relieved by it, we consider that you ought to persevere methodically but resolutely with the plan contained in your instruction and in Admiralty telegram 109, and that you should make all preparations to renew the attack begun on 18th at the first favourable opportunity. You should dominate the forts at the

Narrows and sweep the minefield and then batter the forts at close range, taking your time, using your aeroplanes, and all your improved methods of guarding against mines. The destruction of the forts at the Narrows may open the way for a further advance.

The entry into the Marmora of a fleet strong enough to beat Turkish Fleet would produce decisive results on the whole situation, and you need not be anxious about your subsequent line of communications. We know the forts are short of ammunition and supply of mines is limited. We do not think the time has yet come to give up the plan of forcing Dardanelles by a purely naval operation.

Commodore de Bartolomé, who starts to-day, will give you our views on points of detail. Meanwhile all your preparations for renewing attack should go forward.

The First Sea Lord's Refusal.

But now immediately I encountered insuperable resistance. The Chief of the Staff was quite ready to order the renewal of the attack; but the First Sea Lord would not agree to the proposed telegram, nor did Sir Arthur Wilson nor Sir Henry Jackson who was present. Lord Fisher took the line that hitherto he had been willing to carry the enterprise forward because it was supported and recommended by the Commander on the spot. But now that Admiral de Robeck and Sir Ian Hamilton had decided on a joint operation, we were bound to accept their views. In fact, he was immensely relieved that the operation was at last assuming the form which in the earliest days he and all of us would have preferred. "What more could we want? The Army were going to do it. They ought to have done it all along."

But I, seeing how wofully and fearfully the situation was changed to our disadvantage by the delay and exposure, could not stand this. I saw a vista of terrible consequences behind this infirm relaxation of purpose. For the first time since the war began, high words were used around the octagonal table. I pressed to the very utmost the duty and the need of renewing the naval attack. In this I was stoutly supported by Commodore de Bartolomé; but he was the youngest there, and I could make no headway. I closed the meeting without a decision. I took the draft of my telegram to the Prime Minister. I found him in hearty agreement with it, as was also Mr. Balfour, with whom I discussed it during the day.

Looking back, one can see now that this was the moment for the Prime Minister to intervene and make his view effective. As for me, what could I do? If by resigning I could have procured the decision, I would have done so without a moment's hesitation. It was clear, however, that this would only have made matters worse. Nothing that I could do could overcome the Admirals now they had definitely stuck their toes in. They had only to point to the losses of ships which had been incurred, and everyone would have sided with them. I was therefore compelled under extreme duress to abandon the intention of sending direct orders to Admiral de Robeck to renew the attack.

The First Sea Lord endeavoured to console me.

"It is the right thing," he wrote on the 24th, "without any doubt whatever to send Bartolomé,[1] *and the sooner the better. You are very wrong to worry and excite yourself.* Do try and remember that we are the lost ten tribes of Israel. We are sure to win!!! I know I am an optimist! *Always have been!! Thank God. . . . Hustle Bartolomé! Send no more telegrams! Let it alone!*"

Was I, in the light of all that followed, "wrong to worry and excite myself"? Await the sequel. It is right to feel the things that matter: and to feel them while time remains.

[1] This project was not carried out.

CHAPTER XLIII

ADMIRAL DE ROBECK'S CHANGE OF PLAN

Sir Ian Hamilton's Problem—A Choice of Evils—Far-reaching Decisions—The Sacred Ships—A Discrepancy—General Liman von Sanders in Command—Lord Kitchener assumes the Burden—Complete Cessation of the Naval Offensive—The Turkish Army short of Ammunition—Evidence of Ammunition Shortage—Strength of the Turkish Resistance on Land.

WHAT had happened at the Dardanelles? The army had arrived. From the earliest moment permitted to them the Admiralty had carried all the troops to the point of concentration with punctuality. Sir Ian Hamilton had reached the Dardanelles on the eve of the naval attack on the Narrows, and had witnessed from the bridge of the *Phaeton* its closing scenes.

Sir Ian Hamilton's Problem.

The impression of the sinking of the battleships, the spectacle of the crippled *Inflexible* listed and slowly steaming out of the Straits, the destroyers crowded with the rescued crews, was strong in his mind. These appearances aroused, in a nature chivalrous to a fault, an intense desire to come to the aid and rescue of the sister Service. It was in this mood that he addressed himself to the problem with which he was immediately confronted.

That problem was indeed grave and perplexing in an extreme degree. If the Navy asked for help, Sir Ian Hamilton was resolved to give it to the utmost of his power. If a landing on the tip of the Peninsula and the capture of the Kilid Bahr Plateau would largely solve the naval difficulties, he would attempt it. But obviously then there was not a moment to lose. Every day, every hour, the Turkish defences and preparations would improve and their forces accumulate. A fortnight before, the disembarkation of 40,000 men on the Peninsula might have been effected without great difficulty. But now sharp fighting must be expected. Still, General Birdwood, who had been watching events on the spot since the beginning of March, was eager to land then and there, and confident that the opposition would be overcome by a prompt attack.

But now, for the first time in these military operations, the General Staff were allowed to have their say. They unfolded to their Commander a massive and overwhelming case. The preparations for the landing under fire required an intense degree of organization. No preparations had been made. To carry out such an enterprise required, above all, a proportion at least of most highly-trained troops. None was available. The Australians, however brave and ardent, were, like the Royal Naval Division, only partly trained. The 29th Division had just sailed from England, and would not arrive before the first week in April.

But how would it then arrive? It had been embarked in twenty-two transports, without any idea of having to fight immediately. The ammunition was in one ship, the transport in another, the harness in a third, the machine guns at the bottom of the hold, and so on. Before these trained and excellent troops could go into action, they would have to be disembarked either by small boats in still water or upon a quay, and then completely re-sorted and organized in fighting trim. Mudros harbour (in Lemnos) offered neither facility. Moreover, although nearly 60,000 men were now available within striking distance of the Gallipoli

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

THE FORT AT SEDD-EL-BAHR.

This photograph, showing the Fort at Sedd-el-Bahr after the bombardment, is taken from an angle different from that shown on p. 531. After the landing on April 25, 1915, this ruin was used by the French contingent, who made themselves responsible for the eastern or straits shore of the Peninsula, as a dump for ammunition.

Peninsula, the supplies were scattered throughout the Mediterranean, the hospitals were not prepared, the staff had never come together.

A Choice of Evils.

In the choice of evils which now alone was open to Sir Ian Hamilton, his staff pronounced that whatever were the risks of delay, they were less than those of a precipitate and unorganised assault. The General therefore determined to transfer his base and his army from Lemnos to Alexandria, leaving only sufficient troops at the Dardanelles for minor enterprises, and to organize from Egypt any large military operation which the Navy might require.

* * * *

Admiral de Robeck had come out of action on March 18 with every intention of resuming the attack at the earliest opportunity. But now occurred the sudden and extraordinary change, the repercussion of which we have witnessed at the Admiralty. On the 22nd a Conference was held on board the *Queen Elizabeth*. There were present Admiral de Robeck, Admiral Wemyss, Sir Ian Hamilton, General Birdwood, General Braithwaite and Captain Pollen. Sir Ian Hamilton has recorded of this Conference :—

"The moment we sat down de Robeck told us *he was now quite clear he could not get through without the help of all my troops*.

"Before ever we went aboard, Braithwaite, Birdwood and I had agreed that, whatever we landsmen might think, we must leave the seamen to settle their own job, saying nothing for or against land operations or amphibious operations until the sailors themselves turned to us and said they had abandoned the idea of forcing the passage by naval operations alone.

"They have done so . . .

"So there was no discussion. At once we turned our faces to the land scheme."[1]

[1] *Gallipoli Diary*, p. 41.

Far-reaching Decisions.

It is clear that Admiral de Robeck came to his decision during the afternoon or night of the 21st. It was a far-reaching decision. It put aside altogether the policy of the Government and of the Admiralty, with which, up to this, the Admiral had declared himself in full accord. The plans which had emanated from the Fleet, on which both Admiral and Admiralty had been agreed, were cast to the winds. It withdrew the Fleet from the struggle, and laid the responsibilities of the Navy upon the Army. It committed the Army in the most unfavourable conditions to an enterprise of extreme hazard and of first magnitude. It was a decision entirely contrary to the whole spirit, and indeed to the explicit terms, of the latest messages Admiral de Robeck had received from the Admiralty *after* the news of the action of March 18. It was outside the scope of the orders with which, on accepting the command, the Admiral had stated he was in full agreement. It is true that the Admiralty Telegram, No. 109, of March 15, had said: "You must concert any military operations on a large scale which you consider necessary with General Hamilton when he arrives." But this was not intended to cover, nor did it from its context cover, the total abandonment of the naval attack and the substitution of a purely military effort.

Thus at this Conference on the 22nd two grave decisions became operative: first, that the naval attack should be abandoned in favour of a general assault by the Army; and secondly, that the Army should go back to Alexandria to organize and prepare for this attack, although this process would involve at least three weeks' delay. The Army had in fact arrived too late and too ill-organized to deliver its own surprise attack, but in plenty of time by its very presence to tempt the Navy to desist from theirs.

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

CAPE HELLES.

All that remained of the lighthouse at Cape Helles after the bombardment. This, together with the photograph opposite and others on preceding pages, convey some idea of the intensity of the fire from the ships. Most of the buildings shown were anything but specimens of the jerry-builder's art, the old fort of Sedd-el-Bahr in particular being strongly constructed of heavy stone blocks.

The Sacred Ships.

One must, however, make great allowances for the Admiral and for the naval point of view which he represented. To statesmen or soldiers, ships in time of war possess no sentimental value. They are engines of war to be used, risked, and if necessary expended in the common cause and for the general policy of the State. To such minds the life of a soldier was every whit as precious as that of a sailor, and an old battleship marked for the scrap-heap was an instrument of war to be expended in a good cause as readily as artillery ammunition is fired to shelter and support a struggling infantry attack. But to an Admiral of this standing and upbringing, these old ships were sacred. They had been the finest ships afloat in the days when he as a young officer had first set foot upon their decks.

The discredit and even disgrace of casting away a ship was ingrained deeply by years of mental training and outlook. The spectacle of this noble structure on which so many loyalties centred, which was the floating foothold of daily life, foundering miserably beneath the waves, appeared as an event shocking and unnatural in its character. Whereas a layman or soldier might have rejoiced that so important an action as that of March 18 could have been fought with a loss of less than thirty British lives and two or three worthless ships, and that so many valuable conclusions had been attained at such a slender cost, Admiral de Robeck was saddened and consternated to the foundations of his being. These emotions were also present around the Admiralty table in Whitehall.

A Discrepancy.

There is a distinct discrepancy between the statements of Admiral de Robeck and Sir Ian Hamilton. The Admiral represents that his change of mind was the result of "proposals" made to him by the General, whereas the General states explicitly, "The moment we sat down de Robeck told us he was now quite clear he could not get through without the help of all my troops." The probable explanation is as follows: Until the evening of the 21st the Admiral thought that the Army were not authorized to storm any part of the Peninsula, but only to occupy the Bulair lines after the Fleet had forced the passage. As soon as he learned that the Army were free to act in any direction, and that Sir Ian Hamilton was ready, if called on by him, to descend in full force upon the southern end of the Peninsula, he immediately abandoned the naval attack, and invited the Army to open the passage.

Whatever may be the explanation, the arguments of Admiral de Robeck's telegram were decisive. At the Admiralty they consolidated all the oppositions to action. At the front they paralysed the Fleet.

* * * *

General Liman von Sanders in Command.

On the 24th Sir Ian Hamilton and his staff sailed for Alexandria, whither all the transports carrying troops through the Mediterranean were directed. On this day also on the enemy's side an important step was taken. General Liman von Sanders had hitherto been the head of the German military mission to Turkey, but had not exercised any executive command. The distress and the apprehensions of the Turks, and the crisis of the operations, induced Enver Pasha on March 24 to summon General Liman von Sanders to Constantinople and to place in his hands the entire control of the Turkish forces available for the defence of the Peninsula. General von Sanders assumed the command on the 26th. "The distribution," he writes, "of the available five divisions for both sides of the Marmora which had obtained until the 26th March had to be completely altered. They had stood until this according to quite other principles, scattered along the whole coast like the frontier guards of the good old times. The enemy on landing would have found resistance everywhere, but no forces or reserves to make a strong and energetic counter-attack."[1]

* * * *

Lord Kitchener Assumes the Burden.

It was with grief that I announced

[1] Liman von Sanders: *Five Years in Turkey*, pp. 81–2.

Photo: Copyright.

TURKISH TROOPS ON THE PENINSULA.

After the withdrawal of the ships the authorities responsible for the defence of the Peninsula lost no time in strengthening the land defences. The approaches from the shore were commanded by carefully sited trenches and rifle pits, whilst the garrison was heavily reinforced. Here a few Turkish troops are seen manning the early defences which some time before the British attack amounted to little more than an outpost line.

to the Cabinet on the 23rd the refusal of the Admiral and the Admiralty to continue the naval attack, and that it must, at any rate for the time being, be abandoned. Since the crisis of August, 1914, many undertakings had been given on behalf of the Royal Navy, and hitherto all had been made good. It was now again open to the Prime Minister, to Lord Kitchener, to the Cabinet, if they wished, to withdraw from the whole enterprise and to cover the failure by the seizure of Alexandretta. We had lost fewer men killed and wounded than were often incurred in a trench raid on the Western Front, and no vessel of the slightest value had been sunk. I could not have complained of such a decision, however strongly I might have argued against it.

"But there was no necessity to argue. Lord Kitchener was always splendid when things went wrong. Confident, commanding, magnanimous, he made no reproaches. In a few brief sentences he assumed the burden and declared he would carry the operations through by military force. So here again there was no discussion: the agreement of the Admiral and the General on the spot, and the declaration of Lord Kitchener, carried all before them. No formal decision to make a land attack was even noted in the records of the Cabinet or the War Council. When we remember the prolonged discussions and study which had preceded the resolve to make the naval attack, with its limited risk and cost, the silent plunge into this vast military adventure must be regarded as an extraordinary episode. Three months before how safe, how sound, how sure would this decision have been. But now!

When Lord Kitchener undertook to storm the Gallipoli Peninsula with the

army, he was under the impression that a week would suffice to prepare and begin the operation. But when he had reversed the decision of February 16 to send the 29th Division, when he had countermanded and consequently dispersed its transports, when he had deliberately left the issue in suspense until March 10, when he had allowed the division to be embarked otherwise than in order for battle, he had tied his own hands inextricably. He had no choice now but to wait for weeks in the face of ever-accumulating dangers and difficulties, or to abandon the enterprise. This latter solution, however, he at no time entertained. On the contrary he braced himself resolutely for the effort, and events continued to drift steadily forward.

Complete Cessation of the Naval Offensive.

I still hoped that the continuance of the naval pressure, even within the limits now prescribed, would yield results which would encourage the Admiral to renew his attack, and thus perhaps spare the army the dreaded ordeal.

However, he did not in the event pursue even limited operations. His energies and those of his staff soon became absorbed in the preparation of the comprehensive and complicated plans necessary for the landing of the army. The *Queen Elizabeth* never fired a gun, and all ships remained inactive against the enemy for another month. From this slough I was not able to lift the operations. All the negative forces began to band themselves together.

Henceforward the defences of the Dardanelles were to be reinforced by an insurmountable mental barrier. A wall of crystal, utterly immovable, began to tower up in the Narrows, and against this wall of inhibition no weapon could be employed. The "No" principle had become established in men's minds, and nothing could ever eradicate it. Never again could I marshal the Admiralty War Group and the War Council in favour of resolute action. Never again could I move the First Sea Lord. "No" had settled down for ever on our councils, crushing with its deadening weight what I shall ever believe was the hope of the world.

Vain was it for Admiral de Robeck a month later, inspired by the ardent Keyes,[1] to offer to renew the naval attack. His hour had passed. I could never lift the "No" that had descended, and soon I was myself to succumb. Still vainer was it for Admiral Wemyss, when he succeeded de Robeck, to submit the Keyes plans and his own resolute convictions to the new Board of Admiralty. Vain was it for Keyes in October to resign his appointment as Chief of the Staff and hasten personally to London to plead with Lord Kitchener and my successor for permission to attack. "No" had won, with general assent and measureless ruin.

Never again did the British Fleet renew the attack upon the Narrows which in pursuance of their orders they had begun on March 18, and which they then confidently expected to continue after a brief interval. Instead, they waited for nine months the spectators of the sufferings, the immense losses and imperishable glories of the army, always hoping that their hour of intervention would come, always hoping for their turn to run every risk and make every sacrifice, until in the end they had the sorrow and mortification of taking the remains of the army off and steaming away under the cloak of darkness from the scene of irretrievable failure.

* * * *

The Turkish Army Short of Ammunition.

And yet if the Navy had tried again they would have found that the door was open. Their improved sweeping forces could have concentrated upon clearing the few remaining mines out of the Eren Keui Bay. All their losses were made good. The battle of March 18 could have been resumed a month later in overwhelming favourable conditions; and had it been resumed it would, in a few hours, have become apparent that it could have only one ending.

[1] Commodore Keyes, afterwards Vice-Admiral Sir Roger Keyes, Commander of the Dover Patrol and leader of the attack upon Zeebrugge, 1918.

We knew at the time from secret sources, the credit of which was unquestionable, that the Turkish Army was short of ammunition.

We had only to resume a gradual naval advance and bombardment to discover the wonderful truth that they had, in fact, scarcely any more ammunition. We now know what we could have so easily found out then, that for the heavy guns which alone could injure the armoured ships, they had not twenty rounds apiece.

Not until Bulgaria joined the Central Powers could a single heavy shell be brought from Germany to Turkey. We know now what most certainly could have been ascertained through any attempt at sweeping that there were no more mines. Not a dozen mines, floating or moored, remained in Constantinople and, as with the shells, no mine could reach the scene for six long months.

Evidence of Ammunition Shortage.

The German official account written by the staff officer of Liman von Sanders, the German Commander-in-Chief of the Turks, says :—

"Most of the Turkish ammunition had been expended. The medium howitzers and mine field batteries had fired half their supply. For the five 25·5 cm. (14-inch) guns there were only 271 rounds, say fifty each; for the eleven 23 cm. (9·2-inch) between thirty to fifty per gun. . . . Particularly serious was the fact that the long range H.E. shells, which alone were effective against armour, were nearly entirely used up. Fort Hamidieh had only seventeen of them; Kilid Bahr but ten. Also there was no reserve of mines. What, then, was to happen if the battle was resumed on the 19th and following days with undiminished violence?"

The British Official Military Historian says :—

"On the evening of March 18 the Turkish Command at the Dardanelles was weighed down by a premonition of fate. More than half the ammunition had been expended and it could not be replaced. . . . It is important to realize that had Constantinople been abandoned the Turks would have been unable to continue the war. Their only arms and ammunition factories were at the capital and would have been destroyed by the fleet, and the supply of material from Germany would have been impossible. . . . Their inadequate means of fire control had been seriously interrupted. The Turkish gun crews were demoralized, and even the German officers present had apparently little hope of successful resistance if the fleet attacked next day."

And again :—

"Of the nine rows of mines many had been in position for six months, and a large proportion of these were believed either to have been carried away by the current or to have sunk to such a depth that ships would not have touched them. For the rest, many were of the old patterns and not at all trustworthy, and owing to the shortage of numbers they were at an average ninety yards apart, more than three times the beam of a ship."

Says the Turkish official account :—

"In the attainment of such an important objective, disregarding comparatively small losses, the enemy should have repeated his attack with great force, and in all probability he would have succeeded in forcing the Straits by sea. . . . In Fort Hamidieh there were but five to ten rounds left and the batteries on the European side were equally low."

Strength of the Turkish Resistance on Land.

With the knowledge we possessed at the time I had no doubt, as the Admiralty telegrams show, that the military risks far outweighed the naval risks, and that the military cost in soldiers' lives would far exceed the cost in sailors' lives. We suspected at the time the weakness and critical condition of the Turkish defence against the Fleet as now revealed. But no one estimated truly the tremendous strength of the Turkish resistance against the army. Instead of 5,000 casualities,

which was the War Office estimate of the cost of the landing and of a successful and decisive operation, more than 13,000 casualties were incurred to gain only a footing on one tiny indecisive tip of the Peninsula, and many more in efforts to enlarge the ground gained. And this takes no account of the heavy losses and wastage in the months before the Battle of Suvla Bay, of the 40,000 casualties sustained in that battle, and of the 20,000 others incurred before the final evacuation.

Could the pictures, on which we must presently look, of April 25 with its immortal heroism, of May with its staggering disappointment, of August with its tragedy, and of December with its world-ruining failure and defeat, have risen before the eyes of those in whose hands the power lay and upon whose heads the responsibility before history must descend, can we doubt that they would have thought it better to persevere resolutely and faithfully with the naval attack in accordance with the orders and undertakings which had been given and received ?

Photo: E.N.A.

THE HINTERLAND AT ANZAC.

The sketch reproduced above was made by a German artist and conveys an excellent idea of the type of country on the Gallipoli Peninsula. The sketch was made at a point some distance inland looking westward to the sea. In the distance is the island of Imbros, some twenty miles from the mainland. The sea is just visible to the left of the conical hill.

CHAPTER XLIV

THE FIRST DEFEAT OF THE U-BOATS

The First U-Boat Campaign—Pre-War Strength in Submarines—The Unknown Factors—Lord Fisher's Memorandum of 1913—Efficiency of the British Submarine Service—German Declaration of February 4—Defensive Measures—The Indicator Nets—"Q" Boats—The U-Boat Attack Begins—German Losses—The Straits of Dover—Failure of First U-Boat Campaign—The Blockade Controversy with the United States—Sir Edward Grey's Patience and Conciliation.

CHRONOLOGY is the key to narrative. Yet where a throng of events are marching abreast, it is inevitable that their progress should be modified by selection and classification. Some must stand on one side until the main press is over; others, taking advantage of any interlude, may hasten forward to periods beyond the general account.

The First U-Boat Campaign.

During all the operations at the Dardanelles which a series of chapters has described, the general naval war was proceeding unceasingly. The Grand Fleet still watched its antagonists with tireless vigilance. The Cabinet still laboured to perfect and maintain the blockade against the enemy on the sea and the lawyers across the ocean. A stream of reinforcements and supplies flowed incessantly to France. And lastly, the Admiralty had been called upon to protect the merchant fleets of Britain from a novel and unprecedented form of attack. The first U-boat campaign had begun, and to narrate this episode in an intelligible form it is necessary to look back into the past and to advance somewhat before our time into the future.

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When I went to the Admiralty in 1911 we had 57 submarines (11 A's already obsolete, 11 B's, 33 C's and 2 D's) compared to the German 15; but all our submarines, except the 2 D's, were of a class only capable of operating a short distance from their own coasts. They could not accompany the Fleet, nor make long independent voyages at sea; whereas 11 out of the German 15 were at least as good as our 2 D's. During the three years of preparation for which I was responsible, the submarine service was under Commodore Keyes. As early as 1912 we had begun to visualize in the over-sea submarine a new method of maintaining the close blockade of the German ports which was no longer possible by means of destroyers and surface craft. We therefore sought continually to build larger submarines of "over-sea" or even "ocean-going" capacity. We developed the E class and one or two other vessels of an even larger type.

Great technical difficulties were encountered, and the delays of the contractors and of the Admiralty departments were vexatious in the extreme. The larger type was entirely experimental, and there were not wanting experts who doubted whether the technical difficulties of submerging vessels above a certain size could be surmounted. In addition, owing to the contracts which had been made, practically assigning the monopoly of submarine building to one particular firm, we were at first considerably hampered even in our experimental work. In 1912, on the recommendation of Commodore Keyes, we decided to break these fettering contracts and to place orders for submarines of different patterns on the Clyde and on the Tyne. We also purchased Italian and French submarines, in order to learn all that could be known of their design. Progress was,

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

SUBMARINE IN DRY DOCK: STERN.

An unusual photograph exemplifying the fish-like appearance of a modern submarine. As the aeroplane is to a large extent modelled upon the bird, the creature best fitted to exploit the air for purposes of locomotion, so builders of the submarine must study the features of the dwellers in deep waters.

however, extremely slow, and beset by doubt at every stage.

Pre-War Strength in Submarines.

At the outbreak of the war we had altogether 74 submarines built, 31 building, and 14 ordered or projected. The Germans had 33 built and 28 building. But of the British total of 74 built, only 18 (8 E's and 10 D's) were over-sea boats, whereas of the 33 German submarines built no fewer than 28 were "over-sea" vessels. The situation therefore was that we had a large force of submarines for the defence of our shores against invasion and for the protection of our harbours; but we had not enough "over-sea" boats to maintain a continuous complete submarine blockade of the Heligoland Bight; nor so many of this class as the Germans.

It would be affectation to pretend that we were contented with this state of affairs. On the other hand, it is probable that if we had launched out into an enormous scheme of submarine building before the war, we should have stimulated to an equal, or perhaps greater, extent a corresponding German programme. This would have exposed us to dangers which could never have been compensated by an increase in the number of British submarines. It may well be that all was for the best.

The Unknown Factors.

Neither the British nor the German Admiralty understood at the outbreak of hostilities all that submarines could do. It was not until these weapons began to be used under the stern conditions of war that their extraordinary sea-keeping capacity became apparent. It was immediately found on both sides that the larger class of submarines could remain at sea alone and unaided for eight or ten days at a time without breaking the endurance of their crews. These periods were rapidly doubled and trebled in both Navies. So far from having to return to port in bad weather, it appeared that submarines could ride out a gale better than any other class of vessel. Tried as they were forthwith to the extreme limit of human courage and fortitude, the skilled, highly trained, highly educated officers, sailors and engineers who manned them responded with incredible devotion.

Before the war what submarines could do was one mystery. What they would be ordered to do was another.

Lord Fisher's Memorandum of 1913.

At the end of 1913, Lord Fisher, then unemployed, wrote his celebrated memorandum on the probable use by the Germans of submarines against commerce, and declared that they would certainly not hesitate to sink merchant vessels which they could not bring into port as required by the laws of war. The memorandum owed a great deal to the technical knowledge of Captain S. S. Hall, who was one of Lord Fisher's intimate followers; but the vision of the old Admiral governed and dominated the argument. I caused this memorandum to be immediately considered by the Sea Lords and by the technical departments.

Neither the First Sea Lord nor I shared Lord Fisher's belief that the Germans would use submarines for sinking unarmed merchantmen without challenge or any means of rescuing the crews. It was abhorrent to the immemorial law and practice of the sea. Prince Louis wrote to me that Lord Fisher's brilliant paper "was marred by this suggestion."

But if we did not believe that a civilized nation would ever resort to such a practice, we were sure that if they did, they would unite the world against them. In particular it seemed certain that a Power offending in this way would be unable to distinguish between enemy and neutral ships, and that mistakes would be made which, quite apart from moral indignation, would force powerful neutrals to declare war upon a pirate nation. In his diagnosis of the German character Lord Fisher was right and the Admiralty was wrong. But even if we had adopted his view it is not easy to see what particular action could have been taken before the war to guard against such an attack.

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

SUBMARINE IN DRY DOCK: BOW.

The E 34, one of the class of vessels responsible for some of the most valuable service given by submarines during the Great War, is seen here in dry dock with her bows towards the camera. The photograph on this page and on that opposite show clearly the design of the type of submarine which served the requirements of the Grand Fleet in 1914–18.

The submarine is the only vessel of war which does not fight its like. This is not to say that combats have not taken place between submarines, but these are exceptional and usually inconclusive. It follows therefore that the submarine fleet on one side ought not to be measured against the submarine fleet on the other. Its strength should be regulated not according to the number of enemy submarines, but according to your own war plan and the special circumstances of your country. If Germany had had four times as many submarines at the beginning of the war than was in fact the case, she would have gained a great advantage and placed us immediately in serious danger. It would have been no answer to this danger to have multiplied our submarines by four, nor should we have exposed Germany to an equal danger had we done so.

* * * *

Efficiency of the British Submarine Service.

If I resist any impeachment of the Boards of Admiralty over whom I presided for their submarine policy before the war, still less will I admit that the British Submarine Service was in any way inferior in skill or enterprise to that of Germany. On the contrary, I claim and will adduce proofs that their exploits proved them month by month inconsistently superior. But they suffered from one overwhelming disadvantage which it was not in our power to remove, viz. a dearth of targets. Except for a few sudden dashes to sea by fast vessels, the occasional unexpected voyage of a single cruiser, or a carefully prepared, elaborately protected, swiftly executed parade of the High Sea Fleet, the German Navy remained locked in its torpedo-proof harbours; and outside of the Baltic all German commerce was at an end.

On the other hand, every sea was crowded with British merchant craft—dozens of large vessels arriving and departing every day, while our fleets were repeatedly in the open sea and our patrolling cruisers and merchant cruisers maintained a constant and unbroken watch and distant blockade. If the positions had been reversed and had we permitted ourselves to attack defenceless merchantmen, far more formidable results would have been achieved. Nor is this a matter of assertion. It is capable of proof. As will be seen when the exploits of British submarines in the Sea of Marmora are recounted, one submarine alone—E11—three times passed and repassed through the terrible dangers of the tenfold minefields, of the Nagara net, and of the long vigilantly guarded reaches of the Dardanelles, remained in the Marmora ninety-six days (forty-seven in one spell) and sunk single-handed 101 vessels, including a battleship, a modern destroyer and three gunboats. This prodigious feat of Commander Nasmith, V.C., though closely rivalled by that of Commander Boyle, V.C., in E14, remains unsurpassed in the history of submarine warfare.

* * * *

German Declaration of February 4.

On February 4, 1915, the German Admiralty issued the following declaration:—

"All the waters surrounding Great Britain and Ireland, including the whole of the English Channel, are hereby declared to be a war zone. From February 18 onwards every enemy merchant vessel found within this war zone will be destroyed without its being always possible to avoid danger to the crews and passengers.

"Neutral ships will also be exposed to danger in the war zone, and in view of the misuse of neutral flags ordered on January 31 by the British Government,[1] and owing to unforeseen incidents to which naval warfare is liable, it is impossible to avoid attacks being made on neutral ships in mistake for those of the enemy."

We were now confronted with the situation which Lord Fisher had foreseen in his Memorandum of 1913. The event did not, however, cause the

[1] We had authorized recourse to this time-honoured naval stratagem, knowing well the embarrassment it would cause to the enemy submarines.

Photo: Cribb.

A "Q" BOAT PUTTING TO SEA.

'Q" boats, or mystery ships as they were sometimes spoken of, were one of the most effective devices for trapping submarines. As J. M. Barrie might have said, they wore a false face. They masqueraded as merchant vessels of the most innocent and inoffensive type, whilst hidden on disappearing platforms or, as in the above photograph, secreted behind canvas upperworks were guns of sufficient calibre to sink the largest submarine.

Admiralty serious alarm. Our information showed that the Germans could not possess more than twenty to twenty-five submarines capable of blockading the British Isles. As these could only work in three reliefs, not more than seven or eight were likely to be at work simultaneously: and having regard to the enormous volume of traffic moving in and out of the very numerous ports of the United Kingdom, it seemed certain that no appreciable effect would in fact be produced upon our trade, provided always that our ships continued boldly to put to sea.

On the other hand, we were sure that the German declaration and the inevitable accidents to neutrals arising out of it would offend and perhaps embroil the United States: and that in any case our position for enforcing the blockade would be greatly strengthened. We looked forward to a sensible abatement of the pressure which the American Government was putting upon us to relax our system of blockade, and we received a whole armoury of practical arguments with which to reinforce our side of the contention. We consulted long and carefully together at the Admiralty on successive days, and thereafter I announced that we would publish every week the sinkings of merchant vessels effected by the German submarines, together with the numbers of ships entering and leaving British ports.

* * * *

Defensive Measures.

Meanwhile we made the most strenuous exertions to increase our resources for meeting the attack and to devise every method of countering it.

Regarding the cross-Channel communications as our first and vital care we netted in the Straits of Dover, and established thorough trawler and destroyer patrols. New Divisions were now passing almost every week to

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

LISTENING FOR SUBMARINES.

One of the most valuable instruments included in the equipment of ships during the Great War was the hydrophone, a device employed to detect the near presence of a submarine. The hydrophone consisted of a receiver which, when dropped into the water, picked up the vibrations of a submarine's propellers and passed them by means of communicating wires and headphones to a trained listener stationed on deck.

France, and their conduct and escort required ceaseless and intricate precautions. We also gave special attention to the North Channel (between Scotland and Ireland), the Southampton–Havre route, and bays and sheltered places where enemy submarines might be supposed to rest. Elaborate instructions for dealing with or avoiding submarine attacks were also given to the captains of British merchant ships, and many other measures were taken as recorded in the *Official Naval History*.[1]

The Indicator Nets.

Apart from arming and commissioning the enormous Mosquito Fleet on which we chiefly relied, our two principal devices for destroying the German submarines were the Bircham Indicator Nets and the Decoy Ships, afterwards called the "Q" boats. The Indicator Net was a light flexible curtain of thin steel wire woven into 6 or 10-foot meshes and supplied in lengths of 200 yards. These were laid, clipped together, in long lines across particular channels, and their floats were watched continually by armed trawlers. We had tried them, not without some risk, on one of our own submarines with good results. The submergence of the glass buoys on which the net was hung or the automatic ignition of a calcium light betrayed immediately the presence of the submarine. The net trailing backward wrapped itself around the vessel with a good chance of entangling its propeller, while at the same time a tell-tale buoy attached to the net by a long line floated on the surface, and enabled the hunting vessels to follow their submarine enemy wherever he went. At least 1,000 miles of these nets were ordered during the first months of 1915; and by February 13 seventeen miles of the Straits of Dover were already obstructed by guarded nets. Such was the theory, but needless to say it encountered many difficulties and disappointments in practice.

Photo: Imperial War Museum

A DEVICE OF THE "Q" BOATS.

This photograph, taken on the deck of the "Q" ship *Hyderabad*, shows a quick-firing gun mounted on a disappearing platform. It was the work of a few seconds to bring such a weapon into action against the unsuspecting crew of an enemy submarine.

"Q" Boats.

The device of the Decoy Ships was also simple; the idea arose in the following manner. In the previous September a small steamer, plying between St. Malo and Southampton with fruit and vegetables, had been fired at by a German submarine. Admiral Sir Hedworth Meux, who commanded at Portsmouth, came to the Admiralty to see me on general business, and in conversation it was suggested that a gun might be concealed on this small

[1] Vol. II, pages 271–2–3.

ship under the fruit and vegetables. This was accordingly done. No opportunity of using it occurred, but the idea was revived under the renewed threat of extended submarine warfare.

Early in February I gave directions for a number of vessels to be constructed or adapted for the purpose of trapping and ambushing German submarines. For the most part they were ordinary tramp steamers, but some were to be specially constructed of the build and type of Norwegian fishing vessels. These vessels carried concealed guns which by a pantomime trick of trap doors and shutters could suddenly come into action. Great ingenuity was shown by the Admiralty departments in developing this idea, and the use of these vessels afterwards afforded opportunity for some of the most brilliant and daring stratagems in the naval war.

In addition every form of scientific warfare against submarines was perseveringly studied. Already the microphone or hydrophone for detecting the beat of a submarine propeller in the distance had been discovered: but at this date it was only in an experimental condition. Bomb-lances, explosive sweeps, Actæon nets (or necklaces of explosives) were eagerly and simultaneously developed. A close and fruitful union between the scientist, the inventor, and the submarine officer was established, the best brains of the Navy were concentrated on the problem, and no idea, technical or tactical, was spurned by the Admiralty Staff.

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The U-Boat Attack Begins.

The German U-boat compaign, or the so-called blockade of the British Isles, began as promised on February 18; and that same day a British merchant ship was torpedoed in the Channel. By the end of the first week eleven British ships had been attacked, of which seven had been sunk. In the same period no less than 1,381 merchant vessels had arrived in, or sailed from, British ports. The second week of the attack was completely ineffective: only three ships were assailed and all escaped. The arrivals and departures aggregated 1,474.

By the end of February we were sure that the basis on which we were acting was sound: British trade was proceeding as usual, and the whole of our transportation across the Channel flowed on, division by division, uninterrupted. We continued to publish the weekly figures during the whole of March. In the four weeks of that month upwards of six thousand vessels reached or left British ports, out of which only twenty-one were sunk, and these together aggregated only 65,000 tons. April confirmed the conclusions of March: only twenty-three ships were sunk out of over six thousand arrivals and departures, and of these six were neutrals and only eleven, aggregating 22,000 tons, were British. The failure of the German submarine campaign was therefore patent to the whole world.

German Losses.

Meanwhile the Germans were themselves already paying heavily for their policy. At least four U-boats out of their small numbers available had been destroyed. On March 1 one became entangled in the Indicator Nets off Start Bay near Dartmouth, and was blown up under water the next day by an explosive sweep. On the 4th the Dover nets and destroyers detected, chased and sunk U8, her entire crew being rescued and made prisoners. On the 6th a hostile submarine, which proved finally to be U12, was sighted off Aberdeen, and after a four days' hunt of incredible perseverance and skill by our small craft, was destroyed and ten survivors taken prisoner.

On the 16th a still more remarkable incident occurred: Commander Weddigen, who since his exploits in sinking the three cruisers off the Dutch coast in September, 1914, had become a German national hero, sank a merchant ship off the south coast of Ireland, after taking from it a small gun as a trophy. He was returning to Germany on the 18th when, near the Pentland Firth, he fell in with the Grand Fleet at exercise. The Fourth Battle Squadron was now commanded by Admiral Sturdee flying his flag in the *Dreadnought*. The luck which had brought about the Battle of the Falkland

Islands had clearly not deserted Admiral Sturdee, for in ten minutes the *Dreadnought*, handled with great skill by its captain and navigating officer and aided by the *Temeraire*, rammed the submarine. Her bows reared out of the water revealing her number, U29, as she sank for ever to the bottom of the sea with every soul on board. So perished the destroyer of the *Cressy*, the *Aboukir* and the *Hogue*.

Most of the other U-boats returning to Germany had rough and grim experiences to report. One had been caught in the nets off Dover and only escaped after fearful adventures; another had been rammed by a well-handled merchant ship, the *Thordis*, and with difficulty managed to crawl home in a damaged condition; a third narrowly escaped at the end of a three hours' chase by the destroyer *Ghurka*. There were many other incidents of a similar character.

The Straits of Dover.

It was in the Straits of Dover that we had concentrated our greatest efforts. It was here that we achieved our most complete success. Early in April, U32 was entangled in the Dover nets, and preferred to return all round the north of Scotland rather than renew her experiences. The account which she gave to the German naval staff of the defences and barriers in the Straits of Dover was such that all U-boats were absolutely forbidden to attempt to pass the Straits; all must make a détour "north about" round Scotland on their way to our western approaches. This prohibition continued in force for more than a year. The eastern waters of the Channel thus became completely clear, and no sinkings within the Dover cordon occurred after the middle of April.

We did not, however, know how well our measures and the exertions of Admiral Hood, who carried them out and constantly elaborated them, had succeeded. Injustice was done to this officer when, upon Lord Fisher's advice, I transferred him, about the middle of that month, to another command and appointed in his stead Admiral Bacon, whose mechanical aptitudes and scientific attainments seemed specially to be required on this critical station. It was not until the middle of May that I became aware, from constant study of our gathering information, how excellent had been Admiral Hood's work. Only a few more days were left me at the Admiralty. There was time, however, to repair the injustice, and almost my last official act was to appoint him to the command of the 3rd Battle-Cruiser Squadron. This great prize he accepted with the utmost delight. Alas, it led him to a glorious doom in the Battle of Jutland!

Failure of First U-Boat Campaign.

Surveying the situation in April, it was evident that not only had the Germans failed in the slightest degree to impede the movements of British trade, troops and supplies, but that they had themselves suffered heavy and disproportionate losses in the vital units on which their whole policy depended. By May their premature and feeble campaign had been completely broken, and for nearly eighteen months, in spite of tragic incidents, we suffered no appreciable inconvenience.

All the measures which we had taken, and all the organizations which had been set on foot, to deal with this unprecedented form of attack, were, however, developed and perfected with the utmost energy. Our merchant skippers were made increasingly familiar with all the methods by which submarine attack should be encountered or avoided. The vigilance and ingenuity of our multiplying Mosquito Fleet was stimulated by a generous system of rewards. The Indicator Nets were improved, and produced in great quantities. Tireless scientific research pursued the secret of detecting the presence of a submerged submarine through the agency of the hydrophone. Lastly, the Decoy Ships were increased in numbers, and their ambuscades and stratagems raised to a fine art. To the providential warning of this impotent campaign and the exertions made in consequence of it, we were to owe our safety in the terrible days which were destined eventually to come upon us.

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The Blockade Controversy with the United States.

Results scarcely less to our advantage were experienced in our relations with the United States, on which the whole efficiency of our blockade of the Central Empires depended. This is not the place to discuss the grave and intricate questions of international law which had arisen since the beginning of the war between Great Britain and the United States and other neutral nations. The arguments on both sides were technical and interminable, and whole libraries can be filled with them. Underlying all the legal disputes and manœuvres, was that great fund of kinship and goodwill towards us, of sympathy for the cause of the Allies, of affection for France and of indignation against Germany, which always swayed, and in the end triumphantly dominated, American action. But in spite of this we might well at this time have been forced to give up the whole efficiency of our blockade to avoid a rupture with the United States.

There is nowadays a strong tendency to underestimate the real danger of an adverse decision in America at this period. The National tradition of the United States was not favourable to us. The Treaty with Prussia in 1793 in defence of "the freedom of the seas" constituted the first international relationship of the American Republic. The war of 1812, not forgotten in America, had arisen out of these very questions of neutrality. The established rules of international law did not cover the conditions which prevailed in the great struggle. The whole conception of conditional contraband was affected by the fact that the distinction between armies and nations had largely passed away. The old laws of blockade were, as has been shown, inapplicable in the presence of the submarine.

It was not always possible to harmonize our action with the strict letter of the law. From this arose a series of delicate and deeply perplexing discussions in which rigid legalists across the Atlantic occupied a very strong position.

Sir Edward Grey's Patience and Conciliation.

There were in addition serious political dangers: Irish and German influences were powerful and active; a strong party in the Senate was definitely anti-British; the State Department was jealously and vigilantly watched, lest it should show partiality to Great Britain. The slightest mistake in dealing with the American situation might at this juncture have created a crisis of the first magnitude. It was the memorable achievement of Sir Edward Grey, seconded by our Ambassador at Washington, Sir Cecil Spring-Rice, that this peril was averted. British and American gratitude also illumines the memory of the United States Ambassador in London, Mr. Page, whose wisdom and generous nobility guarded the English-speaking world and its destiny from measureless injury.

It was in these issues that the first German U-boat campaign gave us our greatest assistance. The German announcement threatening neutral as well as British merchant ships had altered the whole position of our controversies with America. A great relief became immediately apparent. The torpedoing at the end of February of the Norwegian steamer *Belridge*, bound from America with oil for the Dutch Government, was another event which turned the current of American irritation from the British blockade to the German outrages. All the forces friendly to the Allies throughout the Union were animated and strengthened, and German influences proportionately cast down. The stringency of our measures against Germany could be increased without deranging the precarious equipoise of our relations with the great Republic. Sir Edward Grey, aided and guided by Mr. Page, was enabled by processes of patience, tact and conciliation to sustain our position without quarrelling through the whole of March and April: and in May an event occurred which was decisive.

CHAPTER XLV

THE INCREASING TENSION

Lord Fisher's Attitude—The Battle-Cruiser Fleet—Lord Fisher and the Sea Lords—His Position Defined—Anxieties about Ammunition—Correspondence with Lord Fisher—The Munitions Crisis—Grave Embarrassments—Admiralty and War Office Compared—Growing Political Discontent.

APRIL was a month of painful and harassing suspense. Sir Ian Hamilton's Army was repacking at Alexandria; Admiral de Robeck's attention was absorbed in preparation for the landing. The Turks were concentrating, organizing and fortifying. Italy and the Balkans trembled in the balance. Our relations with the United States were most delicate. The position on and behind the Russian front caused profound anxiety. A complete breakdown in the methods of munition supply by the War Office plainly impended. The political situation grew tense.

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Lord Fisher's Attitude.

After March 18 the attitude of the First Sea Lord had become one of quasi-detachment. He was greatly relieved that the burden had now been assumed by the Army. He approved every operational telegram which I or the Chief of the Staff drafted for him. In the end he assented to whatever steps were considered necessary for the proper support of the Army. But while he welcomed every sign of the dispatch of troops, he grudged every form of additional naval aid. He endeavoured repeatedly to turn my mind from the Dardanelles back to the northern theatre, where, however, there could not be any serious naval operation on our initiative for many months. He evinced increasing concern about the situation in the North Sea.

Although I did not share Lord Fisher's anxiety, real or assumed, about the North Sea, I thought this month of April was a critical one. The Germans must know that we had a very considerable Fleet, including some of our best modern ships, withdrawn from the main and for the Navy decisive theatre. We hoped that they would believe that the forces at the Dardanelles were even larger than they were. We had sent several of the dummy battleships to the Mediterranean, hoping thereby to tempt the enemy to battle in the North Sea.

The War Staff orders for the attack on the Dardanelles approved by Lord Fisher contained the following passage:—

"A number of merchant vessels have been altered to represent 'Dreadnought' battleships and cruisers, and are indistinguishable from them at 3 or 4 miles distance. . . . They should be used with due precaution to prevent their character being discovered, and should be shown as part of the Fleet off the entrance to the Dardanelles, as if held in reserve. *They may mislead the Germans as to the margin of British strength in Home Waters.*"[1]

We now know that they completely deceived the Turks, who identified and reported one to Germany as the *Tiger*. When I saw the First Sea Lord cordially agree in such a policy of courting battle, I could not take very seriously his general attitude of apprehension. He knew perfectly well that we were strong enough to fight, and no one would

[1] My italics.

have been better pleased had the battle begun.

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The Battle-Cruiser Fleet.

I devised and carried through at this time the formation of the Battle-Cruiser Fleet. This organisation was to consist of three squadrons, each of three battle-cruisers, each attended by a light cruiser squadron of four of our latest and fastest vessels, together with the M flotilla of our swiftest destroyers. The central conception of this force was speed. It presented a combination of speed and power far superior to any naval force at the disposal of the Germans. In the first instance, most of the light cruisers belonged to the Town class and could not steam more than 27 knots; but the Arethusas were now coming rapidly into commission, and would effectually improve the speed of the squadrons. In order to form this Fleet I telegraphed to the Commonwealth Government, asking them to place the *Australia* at our disposal. This they did with the utmost goodwill and characteristic loyalty to the general interest.

* * * *

Lord Fisher and the Sea Lords.

On April 7 the Second, Third and Fourth Sea Lords asked Lord Fisher by minute to reassure them on certain points connected with the conduct of the war. Was he satisfied that we were not putting in jeopardy the principle that the Grand Fleet should be always in such a position and of such strength that it could be at all times ready to meet the entire Fleet of the enemy with confident assurance as to the result? The attack on the Dardanelles, they said, was probably from the point of view of high policy quite correct, but could we afford the loss in ships and the expenditure on ammunition? In conclusion the Sea Lords asked Lord Fisher to assure them that the whole policy had his concurrence, and that he was satisfied with it.

His Position Defined.

Lord Fisher replied formally by minute the same day. He stated that he was entirely in agreement with the fundamental principle of the maintenance of the strength of the Grand Fleet.

"The Dardanelles operation" (he continued) "is undoubtedly one the political result of which, if successful, will be worth some sacrifice in *matériel* and personnel; it will certainly shorten the period of the war by bringing in fresh Allies in the Eastern theatre, and will break the back of the German-Turkish alliance, besides opening up the Black Sea.

"It was with hesitation that I consented to this undertaking, in view of the necessarily limited force of ships which could be devoted to it, of the shortage of shell and cordite, and of the factor of uncertainty which must always obtain when ships attack land fortifications and mined areas under their protection.

"But, as you state, these high points of policy must be decided by the Cabinet; and in this case the real advantages to be gained caused me eventually to consent to their view, subject to the strict limitation of the Naval Forces to be employed so that our position in the decisive theatre—the North Sea—should not be jeopardised in any one arm.

"I am of opinion at the present time that our supremacy is secure in Home Waters and that the forces detached are not such as to prejudice a decisive result should the High Seas Fleet come out to battle. But at the same time I consider that we have reached the absolute limit, and that we must stand or fall by the issue, for we can send out no more help of any kind. I have expressed this view very clearly to the First Lord, and should there at a later period be any disposition on the part of the Cabinet to overrule me on this point, I shall request my Naval colleagues to give their support in upholding my view. . . ."

The position of the First Sea Lord is thus very clearly defined. He is seen to be formally and deliberately identified with the enterprise. When notice was given of a Parliamentary question[1] asking whether the First Sea Lord had

[1] Not eventually put.

Photo : Topical Press.

A DUMMY BATTLESHIP AGROUND AT MUDROS.

As explained in the text, the War Staff orders for the naval attack at the Dardanelles provided for a number of merchant vessels, altered to represent battleships, to take part in the operations. This ingenious device was successful inasmuch as the Turks were completely deceived. They believed the Allied Fleet to be stronger than it was, and actually identified and reported one of the dummy ships to Germany as H.M.S. *Tiger*.

agreed to the attack of March 18, he wrote across the draft answer: "If Lord Fisher had not approved of this operation, he would not now be First Sea Lord." There is therefore no dispute upon the main issue. But it was not possible, having gone so far, to say, as he did in a letter to me of April 12, "I will not send another rope yarn." Great responsibilities had been incurred: a most serious operation impended; the Army was about to land. It was imperative that it should be properly supported. Subject to the paramount requirement of our safety in the North Sea, everything that was needed and could reasonably be spared, had to be given.

Anxieties about Ammunition.

Admiral de Robeck now telegraphed for a number of officers to assist in the landing. Lord Fisher was reluctant to accede to this request, and wished also to impose restrictions upon the employment not only of the *Queen Elizabeth*, but also of the *Agamemnon* and *Lord Nelson*, which would to a very large extent have deprived the Army of their support. I could not honourably agree to this, and my view was accepted. But every officer, every man, every ship, every round of ammunition required for the Dardanelles, became a cause of friction and had to be fought for by me, not only with the First Sea Lord but to a certain extent with his naval colleagues. The labour of this was enormous, but although in the end I allowed no request which reached me from the Fleet to pass unheeded, the process was exhausting. I have no doubt that many requests perished before they reached me, or were not proffered because it was known they would not be welcome. All the time there

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

INDIAN TROOPS EMBARKING FOR THE DARDANELLES.

The troops of the Allied forces on Gallipoli displayed so much desperate gallantry that it would be invidious to single out units or brigades for special mention. A word of praise might, however, be given to the Indian Brigade, to its British and Indian officers, and to the men they commanded for the fighting qualities they at all times displayed and for the high morale maintained in the face of heavy casualties throughout many months of severe fighting.

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

REINFORCEMENTS THAT ARRIVED TOO LATE.

A photograph taken from the bridge of a vessel engaged in transporting troops from Mudros to Gallipoli. The troops on board belong to the Lancashire Fusiliers of the 42nd Division. This fine Territorial Division did not reach Gallipoli until May, 1915. Had they been available for landing on the Peninsula on April 26 or 27, their presence might well have turned the scale if they had pushed on through the valiant but weary remnants of the 29th Division.

were ample supplies of ammunition and many powerful naval reinforcements available which could have been sent without affecting our security in the North Sea. This is proved by the fact that they were subsequently sent on a far greater scale than was now in question, without evil consequences or undue risk and by a different Board of Admiralty.

Correspondence with Lord Fisher.

On April 11 I wrote to Lord Fisher :—

Seriously, my friend, are you not a little unfair in trying to spite this operation by side winds and small points when you have accepted it in principle ? It is hard on me that you should keep on like this—every day something fresh : and it is not worthy of you or the great business we have in hand together.

You know how deeply anxious I am to work with you. Had the Dardanelles been excluded, our co-operation would have been impossible. It is not right now to make small difficulties or add to the burden which in these times we have to bear.

Excuse frankness—but friends have this right, and to colleagues it is a duty.

He replied the next day with equal frankness :—

Never in all my whole life have I ever before so sacrified my convictions as I

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

FRENCH TROOPS IN THE ÆGEAN.

The French contingent, who became responsible for the right flank of the Allied line at Gallipoli, took part in much of the severe fighting on the slopes of Achi Baba. The photograph reproduced above shows drafts sent out as reinforcements nearing the shores of the Peninsula.

have done to please you!—THAT'S A FACT! Off my own bat I suggested the immediate despatch of *Lord Nelson* and *Agamemnon* (hoping they would shield *Elizabeth* and *Inflexible!*). De Robeck will hoist his flag in the *Lord Nelson* you may be sure, instead of the *Vengeance*, his former Flagship. For the work in hand the *Vengeance* quite as good for close action. Nevertheless I say no more. The outside world is quite certain that I have pushed you and not you me! So far as I know the Prime Minister is the solitary person who knows to the contrary. I have not said one word to a soul on the subject except to Crease[1] and Wilson and Oliver and Bartolomé, and you may be sure these four never open their mouths!

Indirectly I've worked up Kitchener from the very beginning *via* Fitzgerald.

I think it's going to be a success, but I want to lose the oldest ships and to be chary of our invaluable officers and men for use in the decisive theatre.

And again April 20:—

I am quite sick about our submarines and mines and not shooting at Zeppelins (who never can go higher than 2,000 yards and light cruisers bound to bring them down). Really yesterday had it not been for the Dardanelles forcing me to stick to you through thick and thin I would have gone out of the Admiralty never to return, and sent you a postcard to get Sturdee up at once in my place. You would then be quite happy!!!

* * * *

The Munitions Crisis.

Since the beginning of the year the disquietude of several of the principal members of the War Council about the supply of munitions for the army had been continually increasing. Mr. Lloyd George and Mr. Balfour, who with Lord Kitchener and me were members of a

[1] Captain Crease, Naval Assistant to the First Sea Lord.

Cabinet Committee set up in January to investigate the position, were insistent that the measures of the War Office were in no way proportioned to our needs. Many hundreds of thousands of men had joined the colours and were now in training. The expansion of the British Army to 70 or even to 100 divisions had been designed, yet rifles had not been ordered to supply more than two-thirds of the men actually recruited. The orders placed for artillery were utterly inadequate. The new and special requirements of the war seemed still further neglected. No effective organization for the production of machine-guns on the scale on which they were needed had been even planned. The supplies of shell of all kinds, particularly high explosive, and the provision of medium and heavy artillery were on a pitifully small scale. The manufacture of trench mortars, bombs, and hand grenades was hardly begun.

When complaint was made to Lord Kitchener, the Secretary of State for War and his advisers replied that every factory and source of supply was working to its utmost power, and that the orders already given were far in excess of the capacity to produce, and that the deliveries even of the reduced amounts were enormously in arrear. This was true, but not exhaustive. It was urged that measures out of all proportion to anything previously conceived must be taken to broaden the sources of supply. The War Office replied that they had already done everything that was possible at the moment, and that the fruits of their exertions would not be apparent for many months. They adduced a great number of examples of their action and showed the orders they were placing abroad, principally in America and Japan. All this was still regarded as quite insufficient, and the argument on both sides became fierce.

Grave Embarrassments.

The critics contended that the Ordnance and Contract branches of the War Office knew nothing whatever about the production of munitions on the gigantic scale required, and that they were far too small and weak a body to deal with these immense and complicated problems of manufacture and industry. To this the War Office rejoined that they could not take the responsibility of allowing these vital matters to pass out of the domain of the professional soldiers into the hands of civilians, politicians or business men, however well-meaning and enthusiastic. Thus on both sides the fires were banked up, and temperature and pressure rose together.

The stress increased with every week that passed. The demands of the Army grew incessantly. Each new division that took the field began to consume munitions of every kind on growing scales. Great numbers of troops at home were seen utterly unequipped. From the front flowed a torrent of complaints. Simultaneously the outputs fell hopelessly below the promises of the contractors. Lord Kitchener dreaded to send fresh divisions to the front even when they were equipped, for fear of revealing still further the inadequacy of the main plant by which they could be nourished. He made every conceivable personal exertion, but nothing in his training as a soldier or as an administrator had fitted him to organize this mighty and novel sphere. His assistants were few and rigid, and he himself took a strict view of the importance of military control.

Admiralty and War Office Compared.

From the indignation which was freely expressed to me by my colleagues during this month of April, I could not doubt that an explosion of a very violent kind was approaching. The Admiralty was in an easier position. We had maintained in peace incomparably the largest Navy in the world, and our sources of supply were upon the same scale. The British Army, on the other hand, was based on arsenals narrowly measured by our tiny peace establishments. The Navy had expanded from a broad basis to perhaps double its size; the Army from its restricted basis had been called upon to expand to the equivalent of ten or fifteen-fold.

At the outbreak of the war we had placed very large orders for everything that the Navy needed with the great firms and dockyards which stood behind the Fleet. I had kept alive the Coventry works by special measures in 1913, thus

giving us a new additional source of heavy gun production. Even before Lord Fisher came to the Admiralty in November, 1914, we had set on foot, in accordance with maturely considered pre-war plans, a great volume of production. The old Admiral's impulse and inspiration supervened on this with cumulative effect. We were thus able, readily and easily, to cope with the developments which the course of the war and the progress of invention required. Already in January and February we were at full blast, and on the whole well ahead with our work in every department.

Our task had not been comparable in difficulty with that of the War Office. In fact, our very efficiency by absorbing much of the existing capacity for armament production aggravated their troubles. Still, the fact remained that the War Office were not solving their problems, and that there was no prospect of their doing so upon the existing lines.

Growing Political Discontent.

Growing wrath and fear were not confined to the War Council. Lord Kitchener's embarrassments compelled him to restrict in the most drastic terms the demands of the armies in the field in respect of all the supplies they needed most. He saw himself forced to give rulings upon the proportion of machine guns, high explosive shell and heavy artillery which seemed absurd and almost wicked to those who did not know his difficulties. Tension grew between the staff at General Headquarters and the War Office. The Army at the front carried its complaints through innumerable channels to Parliament and the Press; and though patriotism and the censorship prevented public expression, the tide of anxiety and anger rose day by day.

Well would it have been if in the solemn moment when we first drew the sword a National Government resting on all parties had been formed. In those August days when our peaceful and, but for the Navy, almost unarmed people stood forth against the Aggressor, all hearts beat together. There was a unity and comradeship never after equalled. All were ardent for the Cause, and there had been no time to make mistakes in method. Then was the moment to have proclaimed National Government and National Service together. This was certainly my wish. But the moment was lost. The Conservative Party, its power magnified in the atmosphere of war, was left free from all responsibility to watch the inevitable mistakes, shortcomings, surprises and disappointments which the struggle had in store. Its leaders had held themselves hitherto under a public-spirited restraint, silent but passionate spectators. They could endure the strain no longer. Thus both from within and from without, at the War Office and in the Admiralty, in France and at the Dardanelles, tension grew into crisis, and crisis rose to climax.

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

THE BASE AT MUDROS.

CHAPTER XLVI

THE BATTLE OF THE BEACHES

April 25, 1915

Description of the Gallipoli Peninsula—Three Main Alternatives—Problem of Attack and Defence—A Grimly Balanced Trial of Strength—The Twenty-fifth of April—At the Turkish Headquarters—"V" Beach—"W" Beach—"X" Beach—The Anzac Landing—Mustapha Kemal—A Bitter Struggle—April 26 at Helles—Exhaustion on Both Sides—Absence of British Reserves—Appeal to Lord Kitchener for Reinforcements—The Turkish Counter-attack Repulsed—A Grim Situation.

THE Gallipoli Peninsula stretches into the Ægean Sea for 52 miles, and is at its broadest 12 miles across. But *its ankle*, the isthmus which joins it to the mainland, is only 3½ miles wide near the village of Bulair; and at *its neck*, opposite Maidos at the south-western end, the width is scarcely six miles.

Description of the Gallipoli Peninsula.

This very considerable area is mountainous, rugged, and broken by ravines. Four main hill features dominate the ground: the semi-circular chain of hills surrounding Suvla Bay rising to 600 or 700 feet; the Sari Bair Mountain just over a 1,000 feet high; the Kilid Bahr Plateau opposite the Narrows between 600 and 700 feet high; and about 6 miles from the south-western tip the peak of Achi Baba, also 700 feet high.

Outside the Straits the landing-places are comparatively few. The cliffs fall precipitously to the sea and are pierced only by occasional narrow gullies. The surface of the Peninsula is covered for the most part with scrub, interspersed with patches of cultivation. A considerable supply of water in springs and wells exists throughout the region, particularly in the neighbourhood of Suvla Bay. One other feature of practical significance requires to be noted. The tip of the Peninsula from Achi Baba to Cape Helles has the appearance from the sea of being a gradual slope, but in fact this all-important tip is spoon-shaped, and thus to a very large extent protected by its rim from direct naval fire.

The operations which were now to take place presented to both sides the most incalculable and uncertain problems of war. To land a large army in the face of a long-warned and carefully prepared defence by brave troops and modern weapons was to attempt what had never yet been dared and what might well prove impossible. On the other hand, the mysterious mobility of amphibious power imposed equal perils and embarrassments upon the defenders.

Three Main Alternatives.

General Liman von Sanders knew that an army estimated at between 80,000 and 90,000 was being concentrated at Mudros, in Egypt or close at hand. Where and when would they strike? There were obviously three main alternatives, any one of which might lead to fatal consequences—the Asiatic shore, the Bulair Isthmus and the southern end of the Peninsula. Of these the Asiatic shore gave the best prospects for the landing and manœuvring of a large army. The Bulair Isthmus, if taken, cut the communications of all the troops on the Peninsula both by land and sea, and thus in von Sanders's words, "afforded the prospect of a strategic decision." Thirdly, to quote von Sanders, "The strip of coast on each side of Gaba Tepe was the landing-place best suited to

obtaining a quick decision, as a broad depression interrupted by only one gentle rise led straight from it to Maidos."[1] There were also at the southern end of the Peninsula the landing-places in the neighbourhood of Cape Helles giving access to the peak of Achi Baba whence the forts on the Narrows were directly commanded. The enemy had no means of knowing which of these widely separated and potentially decisive objectives would receive the impending attack.

[1] Liman von Sanders: *Five Years in Turkey*, page 80.

Problem of Attack and Defence.

To meet this uncertain, unknown, unknowable and yet vital situation the German Commander was forced to divide the 5th Turkish Army into three equal parts, each containing about 20,000 men and 50 guns. Whichever part was first attacked must hold out for two or three days against superior numbers until help could come. To minimize this perilous interval the communications between the three parts had been, as we have seen, improved as far as possible. Roads had been made and boats and shipping accumulated at suitable points in the Straits. Nevertheless the fact remained that Liman von Sanders must resign himself to meet in the first instance the whole of the Allied Army with one-third of his own already equal forces, and nearly three days must elapse after battle was thus joined before any substantial Turkish reinforcements could arrive.

In fact, however, the British Commander had fewer alternatives open to him than those which Liman von Sanders was bound to take into account. Sir Ian Hamilton was under injunctions from Lord Kitchener not to involve his army in an extensive campaign in Asia, for which he had neither the numbers nor the land transport. The resources of the Navy in small craft were judged not to be sufficient at this time to maintain a large army landed at Enos, sixty or seventy miles from its base at Mudros, to assault Bulair. Thus there remained in practice

Photo: Alfieri.

A MODERN HORSE OF TROY.

Not many miles from the site of ancient Troy the British Army, for their landing at Gallipoli, repeated the famous stratagem of the wooden horse. On April 25, 1915, the *River Clyde*, a steam collier of some 3,913 tons, her holds packed with men of the Munsters, Dublins and Hampshires, approached "V" Beach. At the appointed hour, as described in the text, this seemingly innocent vessel became the jumping-off place for hundreds of determined men, many of whom were to die before the shelter of the cliffs could be reached. It is, perhaps, to be regretted that, after the war, this historic vessel was sold to a foreign power for £11,500.

Photo: Underwood & Underwood.

THE LANDING: ANOTHER METHOD.

The troops on board the *River Clyde* had the advantage of protection from rifle fire until they were close inshore, but at the other beaches the troops went ashore in tows of open boats. As the boats approached the shore the men on board suffered severely, being exposed to a raking fire from the Turkish trenches.

only the southern end of the Peninsula open to the Allied attack. But as von Sanders could not know this, he must still continue to provide against all three contingencies.

A Grimly Balanced Trial of Strength.

The issue, therefore, on the eve of battle narrowed itself down to a three days' struggle between the whole Anglo-French forces available, or whatever more these Governments had chosen to make available, and the 20,000 Turks who with their 50 guns were occupying the southern end of the Gallipoli Peninsula. To get ashore and crush or wear down these 20,000 men, and to seize the decisive positions they guarded near the Narrows, was the task of Sir Ian Hamilton; and for this purpose he had in his hand about 60,000 men and whatever support might be derived from the enormous gun power of the Fleet. It was a grimly balanced trial of strength for life and death.

The first incalculable hazard was the

Photo: Taylor.

"W" BEACH: CAPE HELLES.

No sooner had the British forces advanced beyond the beach and made good the landing places than the most suitable of these points were quickly converted into advanced bases. The shore at Cape Helles, or Lancashire Landing, was speedily covered with dumps of stores of all kinds, which were replenished as fast as ships and lighters could unload. This beach was continually harassed by gunfire from the Asiatic shore.

landing under fire. This might well fail altogether. It was not inconceivable that most of the troops might be shot in the boats before they even reached the shore. No one could tell. But if the landing were successful, the next peril fell upon the Turks: they had for at least three days to try to hold out against superior forces. How superior no Turk could tell. It had rested entirely with Lord Kitchener how many men he would employ. If, however, the British and French forces were too few and the Turkish defence was maintained for three days, then the balance of advantage would turn against the Allies. After the third or fourth day the attackers would have expended their priceless treasure of surprise. Their choice would be disclosed and they would be committed almost irrevocably to it. Large reinforcements would reach the Turks; strong entrenchments would be completed; and ultimately the invaders would have to meet the main forces of Turkey which could gradually be brought against them from all parts of the Ottoman Empire. Rapidity and intensity of execution at the outset were therefore the essential of any sound plan.

* * * *

The Twenty-fifth of April.

At daybreak on April 25 Sir Ian Hamilton began his descent upon the Gallipoli Peninsula. The story of the Battle of the Beaches has been often told and will be often told again. From the sombre background of the Great War with its inexhaustible sacrifices and universal carnage this conflict stands forth in vivid outline. The unique character of the operations, the extra-

ordinary amphibious spectacle, the degree of swiftly fatal hazard to which both armies were simultaneously exposed, the supreme issues at stake, the intensely fierce resolve of the soldiers—Christian and Moslem alike—to gain a victory the consequences of which were comprehended in every rank—all constitute an episode which history will long discern. It would not be fitting here to recount the feats of arms which signalized the day. To do them justice a whole volume would be required: each beach deserves a chapter; each battalion, a page. Only the principal features and their consequences can here be traced.

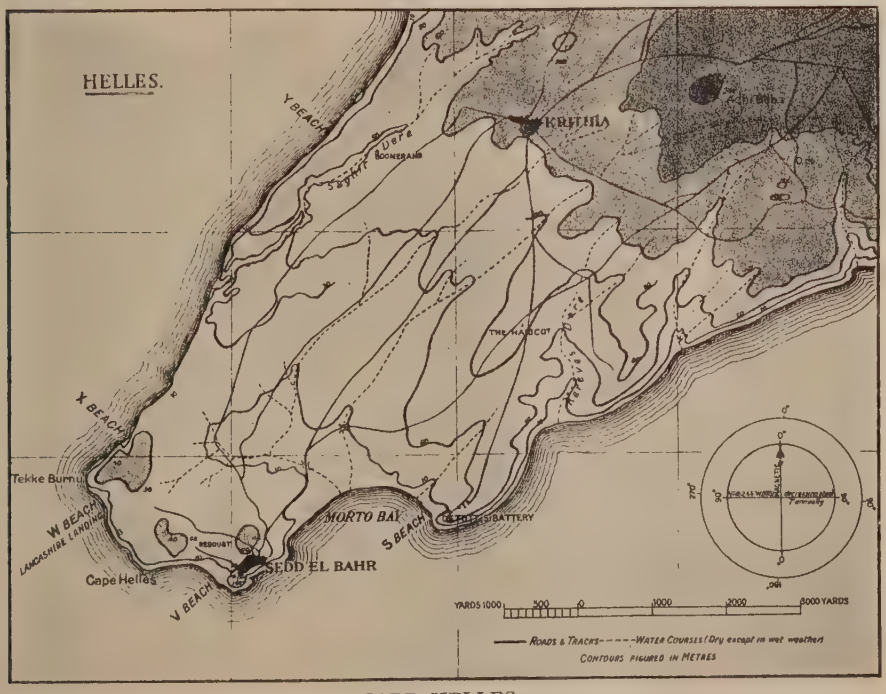
Sir Ian Hamilton's plan comprised two main converging attacks on the southern end of the Peninsula: the first by the 29th Division at five separate simultaneous landings in the vicinity of Cape Helles, the second by the Australian and New Zealand Army Corps near Gaba Tepe opposite Maidos. Both these attacks would have become related in the event of either making substantial progress, and both drew upon the resources of the two Turkish divisions which alone were available at this end of the Peninsula. In addition the French were to make a landing on the Asiatic shore near the ruins of Troy to effect a temporary diversion, and the Royal Naval Division in transports accompanied by warships pretended to be about to land at Bulair.

* * * *

At the Turkish Headquarters.

Liman von Sanders has described the emotions at the Turkish Headquarters in the town of Gallipoli when in the early morning the news of the invasion arrived.

"It was evident from the white faces of the reporting officers at this early hour that, although a hostile landing had been fully expected, its occurrence



CAPE HELLES.

Sketch map of the Cape Helles section of the Peninsula, showing the beaches where the landings took place, the rising ground to the village of Krithia and the peak of Achi Baba. The position of each beach is indicated by its distinguishing letter. The Anzac and Suvla Bay areas will be shown on a map given on page 723.

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

A NATURAL SPRING ON GALLIPOLI.

One of the greatest problems of the Gallipoli campaign was the scarcity of pure drinking water. Springs were not uncommon, but the water from many of them was polluted and unfit for consumption. A notable exception was the famous Romano's Well, situated behind the lines of the Royal Naval Division.

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

60-PDR. BATTERY IN ACTION.

If the Turks were not too plentifully supplied with ammunition, the artillery support on the Allied side was quite inadequate. Apart from the naval guns, the measure of support which the infantry could rely upon in attack was pitifully weak; little more, in fact, than a raiding party in France in 1918 would have expected as a matter of course. Of the valuable 60-pdr. guns only eight were in action up to July, 1915, and by the beginning of August all but one had broken down.

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

FILLING PETROL TINS WITH DRINKING WATER.

In order to augment the water supply thousands of petrol tins and other containers were collected in Egypt and shipped to Gallipoli. These were filled on the beaches from tanks, which in their turn were replenished from water transported by sea in lighters and tankers. Petrol tins were carried to the forward areas by means of pack animals.

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

MANUFACTURERS OF "TICKLER'S ARTILLERY."

One of the greatest needs in a campaign in which the opposing trenches were often but a few yards apart was a plentiful supply of bombs. The celebrated Mills bomb was not available on Gallipoli during the summer of 1915, but tins of Tickler's Plum and Apple Jam were plentiful. Here empty jam tins are being filled with explosives, detonator and fuse, the mixture being surrounded by a layer of shrapnel bullets, pieces of barbed wire and other morsels of scrap metal. This device, when carefully handled, met a much felt want. Bombs of this type were first issued about an hour before the battle of June 4, 1915.

at so many places at once had surprised most of them and filled them with apprehension.

"My first feeling," he adds with some complacency (for he was completely deceived as to which were the true and which the feint attacks), "was that there was nothing to alter in our dispositions. The enemy had selected for landing those places which we ourselves had considered would be the most probable and had defended with especial care." He proceeded forthwith to where he considered the greatest danger lay. "Personally I had to remain for the present at Bulair, since it was of the utmost importance that the Peninsula should be kept open at that place." Thither he also ordered immediately the 7th Division encamped near the town of Gallipoli.

All day long, in spite of the news that reached him of the desperate struggle proceeding at the other end of the Peninsula, he held this Division and the 5th intact close to the Bulair lines. It was only in the evening that he convinced himself that the ships and transports gathered in the Bay of Xeros were intended as a feint, and even then he dared only to dispatch by water five battalions from this vital spot to the aid of his hard-pressed forces beyond Maidos. Not until the morning of the 26th, twenty-four hours after the landings had begun, could he bring himself to order the remainder of the 5th and 7th Divisions to begin their voyage from Bulair to Maidos, where they could not arrive before the 27th. Thus in his own words, "the upper part of the Gulf of Xeros was almost completely denuded of Turkish troops," and finally only "a depot Pioneer Company and some Labour battalions" occupied empty tents along the ridge.

"The removal of all the troops from the coast of the upper part of the Gulf of Xeros," he writes, "was a serious and responsible decision on my part in the circumstances, but it had to be risked in view of the great superiority of the enemy in the southern part of the Peninsula. Had the British noted this weakness they might well have made great use of it."

Nothing more clearly reveals the vital character of the Turkish communications across the Isthmus of Bulair than the solicitude for them manifested at this juncture by this highly competent soldier. It is well to ponder in the light of this fact upon Lord Kitchener's observation, "Once the Fleet has passed the Straits the position on the Gallipoli Peninsula ceases to be of importance."

* * * *

"V" Beach.

We must return to the Battle of the Beaches.[1] Of the five landings in the neighbourhood of Cape Helles that of the 88th Brigade on "V" Beach close to the ruined fort of Sedd-el-Bahr was intended to be the most important. Over two thousand men of the Dublin and Munster Fusiliers and of the Hampshire Regiment packed in the hold of the *River Clyde*, a steamer specially prepared for landing troops, were carried to within a few yards of the shore. It had been planned to bridge the intervening water space by two lighters or barges. Along this causeway the troops were to rush company by company on to the beach. At the same time the rest of the Dublin Fusiliers approached the shore in boats. There were scarcely more than four or five hundred Turks to oppose this assault, but these were skilfully concealed in the cliffs and ruined buildings reinforced by a good many machine guns and protected by mines and wire both in the water and ashore.

As the Irish troops rushed from the hold of the *River Clyde*, or as the boats reached the submerged barbed wire, an annihilating fire burst upon them from all parts of the small amphitheatre. The boats were checked by the wire or by the destruction of their rowers. The lighters, swayed by the current, were with difficulty placed and kept in position. In a few minutes more than half of those who had exposed themselves were shot down. The boats, the lighters, the gangways, the water, and the edge of the beach were heaped or crowded with dead and dying. Nevertheless the survivors struggled forward through the

[1] The map on page 535 is relevant.

wire and through the sea, some few reaching the beach, while successive platoons of Dublin and Munster Fusiliers continued to leap from the hold of the *River Clyde* into the shambles without the slightest hesitation until restrained by superior authority.

Commander Unwin and the small naval staff responsible for fixing the lighters, and indeed for the plan of using the *River Clyde*, persevered in their endeavours to secure their lighters and lay down gangways unremittingly in the deadly storm, while others struggled with unsurpassed heroism to save the drowning and dying or to make their way armed to the shore. The scenes were enacted once again which Napier has immortalized in the breaches of Badajoz. Nothing availed. The whole landing encountered a bloody arrest. The survivors lay prone under the lip of the beach, and but for the fire of the machine guns of Commander Wedgwood's armoured car squadron which had been mounted in the bows of the *River Clyde*, would probably have been exterminated. The Brigadier, General Napier, being killed, the whole attempt to land at this point was suspended until dark.

"W" Beach.

Fighting scarcely less terrible had taken place at "W" Beach. Here the Lancashire Fusiliers, after a heavy bombardment from the Fleet, were towed and rowed to the shore in thirty or forty cutters. Again the Turks reserved their fire till the moment when the leading boats touched the beach. Again its effects were devastating. Undeterred by the most severe losses from rifle and machine-gun fire, from sea mines and land mines, this magnificent battalion waded through the water, struggled through the wire, and with marvellous discipline actually re-formed their attenuated line along the beach. From this position they were quite unable to advance, and this attack also would have been arrested, but for a fortunate accident.

The boats containing the company on the left had veered away towards some rocks beneath the promontory of Cape Tekke. Here the soldiers landed with little loss, and climbing the cliffs fell upon the Turkish machine guns which were sweeping the beach and bayonetted their gunners. Profiting by this relief, the remainder of the battalion already on the beach managed to make their way to the shelter of the cliffs, and climbing them established themselves firmly on their summit. Here at about nine o'clock they were reinforced by the Worcesters, and gradually from this direction the foothold won was steadily extended during the day.

"X" Beach.

Still farther to the left the Royal Fusiliers had landed at "X" Beach, admirably supported at the closest ranges by the *Implacable* (Captain H. C. Lockyer). They were followed by the Inniskillings and the Border Regiment, and by fierce fighting and a resolute charge carried the high ground above Cape Tekke, thus establishing connection with the troops from "W" Beach.

A mile to the left of "X" Beach again, two battalions of Marines were landed without a single casualty at "Y." These were attacked at nightfall, and early the next morning signalled for boats and re-embarked. They, however, drew to their neighbourhood important Turkish forces, and thus for a time aided the other attacks. At the other end of the line, at "S" Beach, on the extreme right near the old fort called De Totts Battery, another battalion was easily landed and maintained an isolated position. When darkness fell, the remaining troops in the *River Clyde* managed to get ashore without further loss, and gradually secured possession of the edge of "V" Beach and some broken ground on either side of it. Thus when the day ended lodgments had been effected from all the five beaches attacked, and about 9,000 men had been put on shore. Of these at least 3,000 were killed or wounded, and the remainder were clinging precariously to their dear-bought footholds and around the rim of the Peninsula. We must now turn to the second main attack.

* * * *

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

IN A FIELD AMBULANCE.

The interior of the operating dug-out in a field ambulance of the 42nd Division. A wounded man has just had a bullet removed from his right arm. Presently he will be removed in a stretcher to Lancashire Landing and thence to a hospital ship for passage to Mudros, Alexandria, Malta or England, according to the nature of his wound and the prospect of a speedy recovery or otherwise.

The Anzac Landing.

It had been intended to land the Australian and New Zealand Army Corps near Gaba Tepe[1] with the purpose of striking across the neck of the Peninsula towards Maidos. In contrast to the landings of the 29th Division at Helles, this all-important descent was to take place before dawn and without artillery preparation. It was hoped that while the Turkish forces were involved at the end of the Peninsula with the 29th Division, the Anzacs would make great headway in its most vulnerable part. The arrangements provided for successive landings from boats and launches, aided by destroyers, of 1,500 men at a time. A rugged and difficult spot half a mile north of Gaba Tepe, unlikely to be elaborately defended, was chosen for the landing.

In the dark the long tows of boats missed their direction and actually reached the coast a mile further to the north, entering a small bay steeply overhung by cliffs till then called Ari Burnu, but in future Anzac Cove. This accident led the attack to a point quite unexpected by the defenders. The actual landing was made with little loss, and the foot of the cliffs proved in practice well sheltered from artillery fire. On the other hand, it carried the Australian advance away from the broad depression from Gaba Tepe to Maidos into the tangled and confused underfeatures and deep ravines radiating in all directions from the mountain of Sari Bair. It also still further separated the Anzac attack from that of the 29th Division at Cape Helles.

[1] See map of Anzac and Suvla Bay on page 723.

As the flotilla approached the shore a scattered fire from the Turkish pickets rang out; but the Australians leaping from the boats into the water or on to the beach scrambled up the cliffs and rocks, driving the Turks before them in the dim but growing light of dawn. The destroyers were close at hand with another 2,500 men, and in scarcely half an hour upwards of 4,000 men had been landed. The skirmish developing constantly into an action rolled inland towards the sunrise, and by daylight considerable progress had been made. By half-past seven, 8,000 men in all had been landed. In spite of rifle and artillery fire which steadily increased against the beach, by two o'clock the whole infantry of the leading Australian Division, 12,000 strong, and two batteries of Indian mountain artillery, were ashore occupying a semi-circular position of considerable extent. The 2nd Division including a New Zealand brigade followed, and within a period of twenty-four hours in all 20,000 men and a small proportion of artillery were effectively landed.

* * *

Mustapha Kemal.

The two Turkish divisions who were left without help of any sort to face the onslaught of the Allied Army were shrewdly disposed. Nine battalions of the 9th Division guarded the likely landing-places around the coast from Gaba Tepe to Morto Bay; the remaining three battalions of that Division and the nine battalions forming the 19th Division were all held concentrated in reserve near Maidos.

At the head of the 19th Division there stood in this strange story a Man of Destiny. Mustapha Kemal Bey had on April 24 ordered his best regiment, the 57th, a field exercise for the next morning in the direction of the high mountain of Sari Bair (Hill 971) and, as Fate would have it, these three battalions stood drawn up on parade when at 5.30 a.m. the news of the first landings came in. A later message reported that about one British

Photo: L.N.A.

THE PRICE OF EMPIRE.

After a battle on Gallipoli one of the most difficult problems was the evacuation of the wounded. When it is realised that most of the area behind the Allied line was shell-swept it must be admitted that the organization for dealing with casualties was one of the most satisfactory features of the campaign. Here a barge filled with stretcher cases and walking wounded is tied-up alongside a hospital ship. Within a few hours of the action most of the casualties will be as comfortable as men in their case can be.

battalion had landed near Ari Burnu and were marching upon Sari Bair.

Both Sami Pasha, who commanded at the southern end of the Peninsula, and Sanders himself regarded the landing at Ari Burnu as a feint, and Mustapha Kemal was ordered merely to detach a single battalion to deal with it. But this General instantly divined the power and peril of the attack. On his own authority he at once ordered the whole 57th Regiment, accompanied by a battery of artillery, to march to meet it. He himself on foot, map in hand, set off across country at the head of the leading company. The distance was not great, and in an hour he met the Turkish covering forces falling back before the impetuous Australian advance. He at once ordered his leading battalion to deploy and attack, and himself personally planted his mountain battery in position. Forthwith—again without seeking higher authority—he ordered his 77th Regiment to the scene. By ten o'clock, when the Turkish Commander-in-Chief galloped on to the field, practically the whole of the reserves in the southern part of the Peninsula had been drawn into the battle, and ten battalions and all the available artillery were in violent action against the Australians.[1]

A Bitter Struggle.

Bitter and confused was the struggle which followed. The long-limbed athletic Anzacs thrust inland in all directions with fierce ardour as they had sprung pell-mell ashore from the boats, intent on seizing every inch of ground that they could. They now came in contact with extremely well-handled and bravely led troops and momentarily increasing artillery fire. In the deep gulleys, among the rocks and scrub, many small bloody fights were fought to the end. Quarter was neither asked nor given; parties of Australians cut off were killed to the last man; no

[1] This episode is well described in the Australian Official History.

Photo: Record Press.

THE ROLL CALL.

In 1874 Lady Butler's picture, "The Roll Call," was exhibited at the Royal Academy. Familiar to most people, the picture shows General Higginson riding down a line of Guards, the survivors of a battle in the Crimea. Here a thin line of the brave Australasian troops are answering to their names after the first landing at Anzac.

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

CAMOUFLAGE: A TURKISH SNIPER.

In the early days of the Gallipoli campaign sniping was carried out by both sides with enterprise and vigour. More than one Turk was captured, cleverly camouflaged to resemble scrub or a tree. This photograph, taken at Anzac, shows a Turkish sniper shortly after capture. He is covered with foliage attached to his clothing and must have been difficult to locate.

prisoners wounded or unwounded were taken by the Turks.

Meanwhile on both sides reinforcements were being hurried into the swaying and irregular firing line. All through the day and all through the night the battle continued with increasing fury. In the actual fighting lines on both sides more than half the men engaged were killed or wounded. So critical did the position appear at midnight on the 25th, and so great was the confusion behind the firing line, that General Birdwood and the Australian Brigadiers advised immediate re-embarkation, observing that decision must be taken then or never. But at this juncture the Commander-in-Chief showed himself a truer judge of the spirit of the Australian troops than even their own most trusted leaders. Steady counsel being also given by Admiral Thursby, Sir Ian Hamilton wrote a definite order to "Dig in and stick it out." From that moment through all the months that followed the power did not exist in the Turkish Empire to shake from its soil the grip of the Antipodes.

* * * *

April 26 at Helles.

All through the night of April 26 the position at "V" Beach continued critical. The landing-place was still exposed to Turkish rifle fire, and a further advance was imperative if any results were to be achieved. Accordingly at dawn on the 26th, preceded by a heavy bombardment from the Fleet, the remnants of the Dublin and Munster Fusiliers and of the Hampshire Regiment were ordered to assault the castle and village of Sedd-el-Bahr. Undaunted by their losses and experiences, unexhausted

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

A MESSAGE FROM ASIATIC ANNIE.

A photograph taken on the beach road leading from Cape Helles to Gully Ravine. Men are seen resting under shelter of the cliff, and a shell which has travelled from the Asiatic shore across the Straits and the southernmost point of the Peninsula, is bursting in the sea. Asiatic Annie, as the guns on the Asiatic side were collectively named, caused considerable embarrassment to working parties on the beaches, as they were able to enfilade Lancashire Landing as well as the rest-camps further inland.

by twenty-four hours of continuous fighting, these heroic troops responded to the call. By nine o'clock they had stormed the castle, and after three hours' house-to-house fighting made themselves masters of the village. A Turkish redoubt strongly held by the enemy lay beyond. The wasted battalions paused before this new exertion, and the redoubt was subjected to a violent and prolonged bombardment by the battleship *Albion*. When the cannonade ceased the English and Irish soldiers mingled together, animated by a common resolve, issued forth from the shattered houses of Sedd-el-Bahr, and in broad daylight by main force and with cruel sacrifice stormed the redoubt and slew its stubborn defenders.

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

THE PERISCOPE AND THE SNIPERSCOPE.

So accurate was the marksmanship of the opposing forces on Gallipoli that many were the devices brought into use to keep down casualties. One of the most ingenious was the sniperscope, which, constructed on the principles of the periscope, enabled a sniper to pick out his target without exposing himself to the enemy.

The prolonged, renewed, and seemingly inexhaustible efforts of the survivors of these three battalions, their persistency, their will-power, their physical endurance, achieved a feat of arms certainly in these respects not often, if ever surpassed in the history of either island race. The reorganization of the troops at the water's edge, the preparation and inspiration of these successive assaults, are linked with the memory of a brave staff officer, Colonel Doughty-Wylie, who was killed like Wolfe in the moment of victory, and whose name was given by the Army to the captured fort by which he lies.

Exhaustion on Both Sides.

As the result of these successes and of the continued pressure of the British attack from its various lodgments on the enemy, a continuous arc was established by the evening of the 26th along the whole coast from "V," "W" and "X" Beaches, and a junction was effected with the single battalion landed at "S." Profiting by the exhaustion, heavy losses and inferior numbers of the Turks, and reinforced by four French battalions, the Allies on the 27th converted this concave arc by a further advance into a line from a point about two miles north of Cape Tekke to De Totts Battery. The extreme tip of the Gallipoli Peninsula had thus been bitten off, all the beaches were protected from rifle fire, and a substantial foothold had been established and consolidated upon land.

The rest of the 29th Division, the Royal Naval Division, and the French Division having landed during the 26th and 27th, Sir Ian Hamilton ordered on

the 28th a general advance from the tip of the Peninsula towards Krithia Village. Although the Turks were beginning to receive reinforcements and had reorganized, they considered this a very critical day. The troops which had opposed the landing had lost heavily. Their battalions were reduced to about 500 strong. By midday the whole of the Turkish reserves were engaged. The British and French, however, were not strong enough to make headway against the Turkish rifle fire. Once inland in the spoon-shaped dip the ships' guns could not help them much, and they had not had time to develop their own artillery support.

Absence of British Reserves.

By the evening of the 28th, therefore, a complete equipoise was reached. If, during the 28th and 29th, two or three fresh divisions of French, British, or Indian troops could have been thrown in, the Turkish defence must have been broken and the decisive positions would have fallen into our hands. And all the time the lines of Bulair lay vacant, naked, unguarded—the spoil of any fresh force which could now be landed from the sea. Where was the extra Army Corps that was needed? It existed. It was destined for the struggle. It was doomed to suffer fearful losses in that struggle. But now when its presence would have given certain victory, it stood idle in Egypt or England.

The next move lay with the Turks. Reinforcements were steadily and rapidly approaching the hard-pressed two Divisions. The leading regiments of the Divisions from Bulair were already arriving at intervals. The 15th Division was coming by sea from Constantinople to Kilia Liman. The 11th Division was crossing from the Asiatic shore. In this situation the 29th and 30th passed away without event.

* * * *

Appeal to Lord Kitchener for Reinforcements.

On the morning of the 27th we received at the Admiralty a telegram from Admiral de Robeck giving an account of the battle.

I took this across at once myself to Lord Kitchener. As soon as he saw that 29,000 men had been landed, he expressed the most lively satisfaction. He seemed to think that the critical moment had passed, and that once the troops had got ashore in large numbers the rest would follow swiftly. But the news of the heavy losses that came in on the 28th, and the further telegrams which were received, showed the great severity and critical nature of the fighting. On this day, therefore, Lord Fisher and I repaired together to the War Office and jointly appealed to Lord Kitchener to send Sir Ian Hamilton large reinforcements from the troops in Egypt and to place other troops in England under orders to sail. Fisher pleaded eloquently and fiercely and I did my best. Lord Kitchener was at first incredulous that more troops could be needed, but our evident anxiety and alarm shook him. That evening he telegraphed to Sir John Maxwell and to Sir Ian Hamilton assigning an Indian Brigade and the 42nd Territorial Division then in Egypt to the Dardanelles.

There was no reason whatever why these forces and others should not have been made available as a reserve to Sir Ian Hamilton before his attack was launched, in which case the preparations for bringing them to the Peninsula would have been perfected simultaneously with those of the attack, and the transports could have carried them to the Peninsula the moment the beaches were ready for their reception. These reinforcements aggregating 12,000 or 13,000 rifles could have fought in the battle of the 28th or enabled it to be renewed at dawn on the 29th. In fact, however, the Indian Infantry Brigade did not land until May 1 and the leading brigade of the 42nd Division did not disembark until May 5.

The Turkish Counter-attack Repulsed.

Meanwhile reinforcements from all quarters and artillery taken from the defences of the Straits were steadily reaching the Turks. By May 1 the local German Commander, Sodenstern,

thought himself strong enough to begin a general counter-attack, and during the whole of the 1st, 2nd, and 3rd, he continued to thrust in his troops, wearied as they were either by march or battle, in a series of desperate and disconnected attempts to drive the Allies into the sea. But if Sir Ian Hamilton's army was not strong enough to advance itself, neither could it be shaken from its positions. By May 3 the Turkish attacks had broken down completely with very heavy loss. The first wave of Turkish reinforcements had spent itself, and it was again the turn of the Allies. The organization of the Beaches had been established; supplies, artillery and ammunition had been landed in considerable quantities. There was nothing to prevent a renewed general advance on the 4th or 5th against the discouraged Turks, had additional troops proportionate to the new situation been available. As it was the attack could not be begun until the 6th, and so short of troops was Sir Ian Hamilton that he found it necessary to withdraw the 2nd Australian Brigade and the New Zealand Brigade from the Anzac area to Helles.

The new battle commenced on the morning of the 6th and was continued on the 7th and 8th. It was sustained by nearly 50,000 British and French troops with 72 guns, against which the Turks mustered approximately 30,000 men with 56 guns. The result was a great and bitter disappointment for the Allies. Only a few hundred yards were gained along the whole front. The losses both of the British and French had been very heavy. In all from the 25th to the cessation of the attack on the evening of the 8th, the British had lost nearly 15,000 killed and wounded and the French at least 4,000.

A Grim Situation.

The situation disclosed on the morrow of this battle was grim. Sir Ian Hamilton's whole army was cramped and pinned down at two separate points on the Gallipoli Peninsula. His two main attacks, though joined by the sea, were now otherwise quite disconnected with each other. None of the decisive positions on the Peninsula were in our hands. A continuous line of Turkish entrenchments stood between the British and Achi Baba, and between the Australians and the mountain of Sari Bair or the town of Maidos. These entrenchments were growing and developing line upon line.

The French having been withdrawn from Troy, the Turkish troops in Asia were free to reinforce the Peninsula. All the available British reserves, including the Indian Brigade and the 42nd Division, had been thrown in and largely consumed after their opportunity had passed. The casualties in every battalion had been serious, and there was no means at hand of filling the gaps. Not even the regular 10 per cent reserve which follows automatically every division sent on active service had been provided for the 29th Division.

On the 9th Sir Ian Hamilton reported that it was impossible to break through the Turkish lines with the forces at his disposal, that conditions of trench warfare had supervened, and that reinforcements of at least an Army Corps were needed. At least a month must intervene before the drafts needed to restore the Divisions already engaged and the large new forces plainly required could be obtained from home. What would happen in this month of continued wastage in the Allied Army and of unceasing growth in the Turkish power? Initiative and Opportunity had passed to the enemy. A long, costly struggle lay before us and far greater efforts would now certainly be required.

CHAPTER XLVII

BEYOND THE DARDANELLES

Falkenhayn's Doctrine—The New German Striking Force—The Dardanelles Attacked—Reactions of the Dardanelles—The Pressures on Falkenhayn—The Point of Attack—The Crown Prince—The Assembly of the Eleventh Army—H.'s Part—The Niemen Army—On the Eve of the Attack—Gorlice: The Bombardment.

FALKENHAYN was a convinced and inveterate "Westerner." He believed that any great offensive against Russia would evaporate in the immense indefinite regions and measureless recesses to which the Russian armies could retire. Constantly before his mind's eye rose the warning pictures of the fate of Napoleon's Grand Army in the invasion of 1812.

Falkenhayn's Doctrine.

He did not choose to remember that Napoleon had no railways which could continually nourish large armies 1,000 or 2,000 miles from their home-base, and provide them with shelter from the winter and well-stocked depôts at every stage of their advance. All his heart was in the war in France and Flanders. There alone, in his view, could the supreme struggle be decided. There, was the proper and official theatre of war. There alone, could orthodox military principles receive their satisfaction. These strong professional views he shared with his leading opponents, with Joffre, with French, and after French with Haig. "Better," he might almost have exclaimed, "be defeated in adhering to sound military doctrine, than conquer by 'irregular' methods."

However, as we have seen, the power and fame of Hindenburg, reinforced by the obtrusive influence of the politicians, had overruled his better judgment, forced him to smirch the purity of his creed, and make submission to "the evil thing." The four corps which he had longed to hurl into a new offensive in the west had been wrested from him. They had marched and fought in the Winter Battle, gaining new cheap laurels for his dangerous rivals, but producing as he had predicted no decisive strategic result. What was he to do? He must call a new army into being to replace the legions torn from his command.

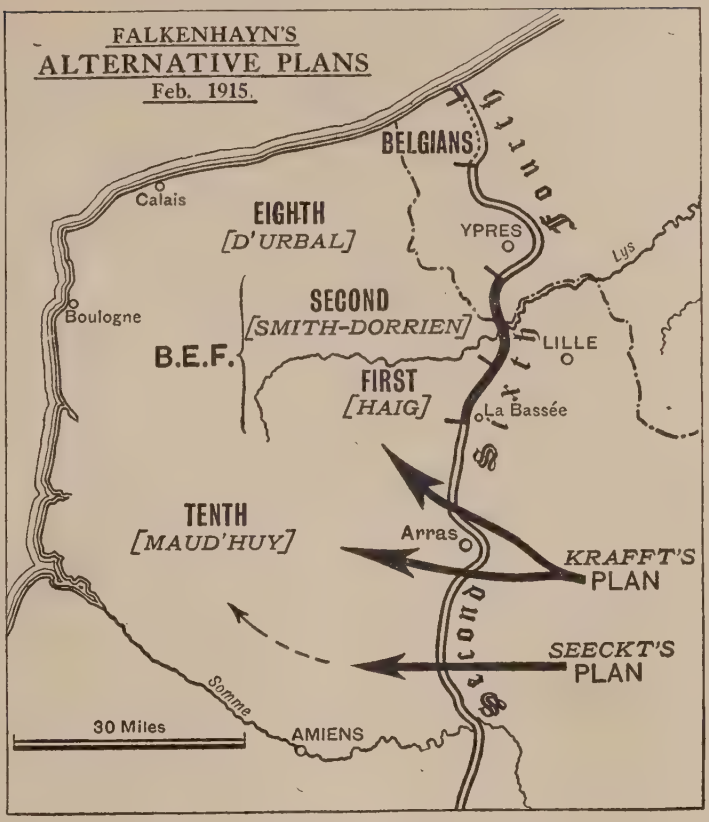
The New German Striking Force.

On February 22 he confabulated with Colonel von Wrisberg, the head of the organizing department of the Ministry of War, upon the creation of a new reserve. New nine-battalion divisions were to be formed by taking three battalions from each of the divisions on the Western Front, and by reducing the number of guns in the batteries from six to four, and so on. The weakened divisions were each to be compensated with 2,400 trained recruits and additional machine-guns.

This transformation was expected to take from six to eight weeks; and when completed Falkenhayn hoped to have at his disposal a free striking force of twenty-four new divisions. Actually from lack of equipment and other causes he had to content himself with fourteen, fit for service at the beginning of April. Upon these fourteen he was already building his plans. They should be formed into an Eleventh Army with the highly competent Colonel von Seeckt, afterwards better known as its Chief of Staff, under some figurehead.

Early in March he set Seeckt, Krafft, Kuhl and Tappen to find the

best place in the Anglo-French line for striking the longed-for blow. They made profound studies, replete with details and time-plans, of the requisite number of divisions and guns. Seeckt selected that same front from Arras to the Somme which Ludendorff from 50 miles further back was to attack in 1918. Hohenborn, the War Minister, concurred in this, holding that "it was the northern wing of the enemy front in the first place [i.e. the British forces] which should be broken and crushed." The right flank of the British then near La Bassée was to be assailed, and they were to be pushed north-west towards Boulogne and Calais, while a left-handed stroke swept the French to the southward. All these plans so busily prepared came to naught. Once again the east prevailed; but this time it was not the influence of H, but the force of events which plunged Falkenhayn into a new desertion of his favourite theories.



FALKENHAYN'S ALTERNATIVE PLANS, FEBRUARY, 1915.

General von Falkenhayn, in common with Joffre and French, was a staunch believer in the importance of the Western Front. In his view the spectacular adventures of H against the Russians were unlikely to affect the issue, so he cast about for the troops necessary to resume operations against the Allied line in the west. By a scheme of reorganization described in the text, a new force was assembled and a plan for its employment prepared by Colonel von Seeckt. The direction of Seeckt's proposed offensive is outlined in the sketch map given above. It was to take the form of a drive between Arras and the Somme, with the object of thrusting back the right flank of the British north-west towards Boulogne and Calais, while a left-handed stroke swept the French to the southward. As will be shown, this plan was destined to come to naught.

The Dardanelles Attacked.

On February 18 a numerous and powerful British fleet, supported by a French squadron, opened fire upon the outer forts of the Dardanelles.[1] The two seaward forts of the Gallipoli Peninsula were much damaged and their guns were destroyed the next day by landing parties from the ships.

[1] An event that has already figured in this narrative, but is here briefly recounted in order to demonstrate one of the important repercussions of the attack upon the Dardanelles.

As each successive day deliberate and methodical long-range bombardments accompanied by sweeping operations took place, it became evident that a serious attempt was to be made to force the Dardanelles. If this should succeed, Constantinople, with the only Turkish magazines and arsenals, would fall into the power of the victors, and the best that could be hoped for was that the Young Turk leaders would evacuate European Turkey, and continue the struggle as a purely Asiatic power. Thus the only ally the Teutonic Empires had gained would be irretrievably broken. Even more serious would be the political consequences. The spoils of the Turkish Empire would be at the disposal of the Allies. They could offer to Italy, Greece, and Roumania, all three already trembling on the verge of joining them, ample and highly-coveted rewards. They could act upon Bulgaria both by the threat of isolation amid a hostile Balkan Peninsula, and by potent bribes.

Reactions of the Dardanelles.

The reactions of the British thrust at Constantinople were immediately apparent upon all these four States. The demands of Italy and her preparations developed apace. Greece, torn between King Constantine and Venizelos, was apparently ready to supply an army to attack the Gallipoli Peninsula. King Ferdinand talked about joining the Allies, and refused to receive General von der Goltz in audience. Roumania froze into silence. Falkenhayn was forced to face the prospect of a complete adverse Balkan block which had everything to gain from the ruin of the Turkish and Austro-Hungarian Empires.

But all these direct impending consequences were in their turn dwarfed by the effect on Russia of full intimate contact with England and France, should the British Navy achieve the entry and command of the Black Sea. Russian troops would then flow freely southwards to animate the Balkan confederacy. British and French munitions with the world markets and the oceans behind them would revive and multiply the Russian armies.

How to stop it? There were the strong defences of the Dardanelles, the forts, the mobile armaments, the minefields, the adverse current, the great hazards of the adventure! It was a long-respected maxim that ships could not fight forts. But supposing the ships had guns which could destroy the forts and the forts had no guns which could reach the ships while so engaged, such a theory would evidently require modification. But worse lay behind. The power of the fortress cannon against the British Fleet was severely measured by their supplies of armour-piercing shells. When these were exhausted, the forts had spoken their last word, and the advancing Fleets would sweep the minefields, no doubt with loss, but also with certainty.

Falkenhayn learned with distaste that the forts were ill-supplied with heavy ammunition and particularly with armour-piercing shells, and that no reserve of mines existed. On March 10 Admiral von Usedom, the German officer who had been appointed to command the water defences of the Straits, telegraphed: "Despite the relatively small success of the enemy, the overwhelming of all the Dardanelles works cannot be prevented indefinitely, unless the munitions and mines now on order for months arrive soon, or the defence is sustained by submarines from home waters."

It could not take less than two months for submarines despatched from Kiel to make the perilous voyage. As for the shells and mines, how were they to reach the scene? Serbia was unconquered. Roumania, though professing friendship, was unwilling to transport munitions. In fact, although officers in plain clothes could travel to and fro across the neutral barrier, no munitions were allowed to pass from Germany to Turkey for nearly eight months. But who could tell what might happen in six weeks?

All these pressures developed upon the high strategic mind of Germany during February, March and April. On March 18 the hostile fleet made what appeared to be a resolute attempt to force the

passage of the Straits. The great ships engaged the forts with vigour, and beat their gunfire down. The sweepers advanced towards the vital irreplaceable barrier of mines. However, luckily for **O.H.L.**[1] the last spare handful of mines had been laid parallel to the course of the Fleet in an area which it had believed was swept, and two or three ships were sunk, one French ship with heavy loss of life. The British Fleet, having itself suffered a loss of some forty lives, then withdrew, apparently baffled, from the contest, and the intelligence reports informed Berlin that a considerable army was collecting in Egypt for a land attack on the Gallipoli Peninsula in concert with a renewed attack by the Fleet.

On the other hand, it was stated that as the Russians had now laid claim to Constantinople, the British were no longer in earnest about forcing the Dardanelles. As to the land attack, the Turks, who had now crowded into the Gallipoli Peninsula and were under the command of General Liman von Sanders, professed confidence. But the difficulty about stopping the Fleet consisted in the fact that the minefields could not be renewed if damaged in any way, and that there were less than fifty large armour-piercing shells for all the decisive guns of the forts together.

The Pressures on Falkenhayn.

We can see these two opposing sets of circumstances maturing simultaneously in Falkenhayn's mind; the Eleventh Army gathering for use in the west, and this horrible intrusion upon Turkey from the south-east Mediterranean. In the fine brain of the supreme commander the two principles fought for mastery. In the end he decided of his own free will that the most urgent task was to crush Serbia and to open a road for munitions to Constantinople and the Dardanelles. Thus by the beginning of April when the new Eleventh Army was in being, Falkenhayn had already abandoned all his plans to use it in the west, and obeying the dominant strategic compulsion of the British attack on the Dardanelles, had decided to employ it against Serbia for the salvation of Constantinople and Turkey.

While he was in this mood of concession to the eastern heresy, another wave of pressures caught hold of him. Conrad had been cured by harsh experience of all desire for adventures against Serbia. He was clutching at the crests and passes of the Carpathians. At more than one point the Russian vanguards already overlooked the broad Hungarian plain. One more effort, one more success, and all the floods of Russian manhood would flow ravaging into the home-lands of Hungary. Such an event would rack the Empire to its foundations. Week by week the Russian flood mounted. The Austrian dykes and dams were already breaking. The major strategic values asserted themselves upon the Austrian Headquarters. Who now cared for Serbia, Italy and Roumania? Bulgaria and Turkey seemed relatively meaningless factors. At all costs the Carpathian front must be held.

To all German suggestions of a joint operation against Serbia, Conrad turned a dull ear. Nothing now mattered to him but the hour-to-hour defence of the Eastern Front, and for this he had a plan; a plan which in time, space and direction was the expression of his military genius. Somewhere on the Dunajetz river, say between Gorlice and Tarnow, there must be an efficient German thrust. Austrian troops would not suffice. There must be a German army capable of crashing through the Russian front and thus turning and undermining their whole line of battle along the summits of the Carpathians. Conrad saw that for him all might be regained by a punch with real Germans at this particular and deadly point. This then was what he urged, and to nothing else would he listen.

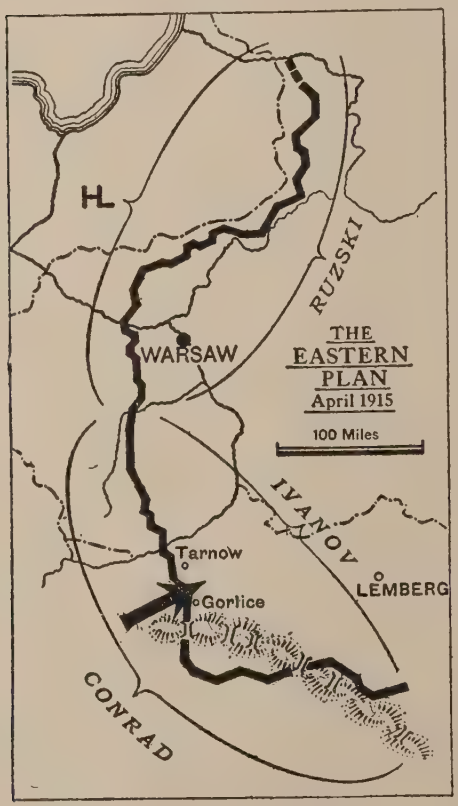
The Point of Attack.

Falkenhayn had already relinquished his dreams of an offensive against the British in France. He had resigned himself to an eastern campaign to relieve Constantinople. He now somewhat easily acceded to Conrad's demands. He certainly responded professionally

[1] Oberste Heeres-Leitung: the German G.H.Q.

to the strategic charm of his colleague's conception. He saw this was the place to hit. He saw that German troops alone could strike the blow. By this time the dreaded naval attack upon the Dardanelles had unaccountably dwindled and ceased. The danger was constant, but the urgency had abated; and Conrad pointed the path and clamoured for aid to his forces.

So, early in April Falkenhayn having first been drawn against his will to the east, decided to take all chances at the Dardanelles and succour Conrad. But, he said, as generals should always say, "If this is worth doing, it is worth doing well," and he said, what only those in the highest command can say, "We will make a set-piece of it." Four German divisions (which was all that Conrad had dared to ask) would be too few. Four corps might be enough. Conrad should have double what he asked. The new Eleventh German Army should be used between Gorlice and Tarnow.



THE EASTERN PLAN, APRIL, 1915.

In the thrust to be delivered against the Russian front by the newly assembled Eleventh Army, the manœuvre which HL had hitherto consistently adopted against the Russians was abandoned in favour of a frontal assault north-east across the foothills between the Vistula and the mountains. It was intended that when the Russian front was pierced the Eleventh Army should wheel until it faced east and then advance in rear of the Russian armies holding the Carpathians. How the plan developed is shown on the map on page 673.

The Crown Prince.

In all this conflict of ideas and pressures, it is interesting to notice the part played by the German Crown Prince. No doubt he had accomplished military advisers, but certainly the tact and diplomacy which he employed deserve attention.

On April 1 the Crown Prince had a long conversation with Falkenhayn. The Heir to the Throne, who had a considerable stake in all that was going forward, began by expounding the paramount importance of the Western Front. He declared his belief that the decision of the war could only be attained in France against the Western Powers, and that this would require the use of all the forces of the German army. In his view "this fundamental idea must hold good during the whole war." Thus he showed himself in the fullest accord with Falkenhayn's doctrine. For the present, however, he added, every attempt to reach a decision in the west now that the Austrian position had attained such importance was premature. The Russians must first of all be struck down and be made to make a separate peace. Falkenhayn's intention was merely to cripple the Russian power for some considerable time, and therefore not to use more forces against them than necessary.

Not thus in the Crown Prince's view would the Germans attain the necessary freedom to enable them to carry out their main task, their final task in the west. Far rather was it necessary to put in such strong forces in the east that a decision might be attained there. Here was the policy of the "Easterners" expressed in the language of the Western

After the colour-sketch by John de G. Bryan.

THE FIRST GAS ATTACK: LANGEMARCK.

April 22, 1915, was a glorious spring day. It began quietly on the front east and north-east of Ypres, but later, in the forenoon, there was considerable shelling. At 5 p.m. Ypres was heavily bombarded, and to the north-east before Langemarck, from the German trenches opposite the sector held by Algerian troops, a yellowish cloud began to drift slowly towards the Allied line. Presently the French coloured troops, coughing and choking, were seen to be retiring, and it speedily became obvious that something had happened of an unusual and serious nature.

school. We have quoted Kuhl. If the Crown Prince ever in fact used such arguments—and this is not yet disputed—he certainly wrapped the shrewdest military counsel in the coverings most likely to conciliate Falkenhayn. Falkenhayn was persuaded three-quarters of the way. He would not boldly seek the destruction of Russia and suffer all minor punishment elsewhere; but he agreed to throw his reserves upon the east rather than the west, and he agreed further to throw them against Russia in the first instance, rather than against Serbia for the relief of Constantinople.

The Assembly of the Eleventh Army.

The plan which Conrad had conceived and which Falkenhayn had agreed to implement with doubled forces was a striking departure from the traditional German methods which H. had hitherto, with a single exception at Lodz, consistently employed. Instead of a wide enveloping movement directed against

the flanks and rear of the enemy, it was a straightforward frontal attack. There was to be a break-through in the centre, or as the French call it, "*une percée*," similar to those so often extravagantly bid for on the Western Front. The sector between Gorlice and Tarnow was about thirty miles wide. Behind the Austrian line between these two towns the German Eleventh Army began in early April to assemble. It was finally composed of four German Corps drawn from the French front; the Guard from Alsace, the Xth from the west of Rheims, the XLIst from Chaulnes, and a composite corps from Lorraine. To these were added the Austrian VIth Corps and a Hungarian cavalry division; in all one cavalry and ten infantry divisions: about 170,000 men.

The Eleventh Army had 352 field and 146 heavy guns, and the Austrian Fourth Army behind whom they were forming had 350 field and 103 heavy guns: that is to say, a field gun to about every 45 yards and a heavy gun to every 132 yards. Although these proportions were far surpassed by both sides on the Somme in 1916, they represented in May 1915 the greatest artillery concentration yet prepared.

The direction of the Gorlice-Tarnow attack was to be north-east across the foothills between the Vistula and the mountains, and once the Russian line was broken, the Germans would wheel their front until they faced east, thus traversing, as may be seen by the map, the rear of all three Russian armies battling along the Carpathians to the southward. Indeed, to make the operation fruitful in the highest degree, or as Falkenhayn expressed it, to improve the "harvest prospects," he suggested to Conrad that the Austrian armies holding the mountains should "give way step by step drawing the enemy after them" into Hungary. But Conrad ignored the proposal. He could not bring himself to yield Hungarian soil. He had no desire to encourage his armies to retreat. His efforts had usually been required in the opposite sense.

H.'s Part.

To cover the withdrawal of such important forces from France "lively activity" was prescribed along the entire Western Front. The gas attack at Ypres —not by shelling as at Bolimov, but by the continuous discharge of gas from cylinders—which began on April 22 was the most formidable of these distractive enterprises. The precipitate exposure of this deadly device at a time when no German reserves were at hand to exploit its surprising effects, was one of the debts which the western allies owned to the Eastern Front. **H.** were likewise ordered to make a diversion in their northern sphere.

They seem to have viewed the Gorlice-Tarnow project with restrained enthusiasm. They had almost come to regard the Eastern Front as their preserve. The arrival of Falkenhayn and **O.H.L.** as prime actors in these scenes, furnished with the reinforcements for which **H.** had long pleaded in vain, could scarcely be welcomed. Moreover **H.** had only one method—a vast outflanking movement from the north. To march between Riga and Kovno and then drive southwards far behind the Russian front, cutting the main railways which sustained it, was their ideal conception. For this the forces were lacking. The most they could offer by way of diversion was a powerful raid by three cavalry supported by three infantry divisions into Courland and Lithuania. This operation began at the end of April and no doubt excited Russian concern.

The Niemen Army.

Hindenburg's own remarks explain the direction in which his influence was exerted.

"My Headquarters was at first only an indirect participant in the great operation which began at Gorlice. Our first duty, within the framework of this mighty enterprise, was to tie down strong enemy forces. This was done at first by attacks in the great bend of the Vistula west of Warsaw and on the East Prussian frontier in the direction of Kovno, then on a greater scale by a cavalry sweep into Lithuania and Courland which began on April 27. The advance of three cavalry divisions, supported by the same number of

THE BREAK-THROUGH AT GORLICE-TARNOW.

The general idea of the attack between Gorlice and Tarnow was Conrad's. He had hoped for German aid and he was not disappointed. Falkenhayn was determined that there should be no mistake, and his new Eleventh Army, accordingly, was as strong as he could make it. It comprised four German corps from the Western Front, an Austrian corps, and a Hungarian cavalry division. This formidable force, supported by a weight of artillery greater than anything hitherto assembled at one point, swept through and beyond the Russian lines, rendering the Russian Carpathian front untenable and causing the precipitate withdrawal of the Russian armies which, but a few weeks before, had constituted so grave a menace to the plains of Hungary.

infantry divisions, touched Russia's war zone at a sensitive spot. For the first time the Russians realized that by such an advance their most important railways which connected the Russian armies with the heart of the country could be seriously threatened. They threw in large forces to meet the invasion. The battles on Lithuanian soil dragged out until the summer. We found ourselves compelled to send larger forces there, to retain our hold on the occupied region and keep up our pressure on the enemy in these districts which had hitherto been untouched by war. Thus a new German army gradually came into existence. It was given the name of the "Niemen Army" from the great river of this region."

The Russian forces holding the front against which these dire preparations were progressing, consisted of the Third Army under General Radko Dimitriev, who had hitherto found no difficulty in containing the bulk of the Austrian Fourth Army. The greatest pains were taken to conceal from the Russians the gathering of the storm. All German reconnoitring parties were dressed in Austrian uniforms, and until within a few days of the battle, General Dimitriev was quite unaware of what impended upon him. Still less did he suspect its scale and intensity. The German Staff Officers climbing the hill-tops could see the Russian positions laid out before them as on a map. There were three lines of loop-holed trenches with overhead cover, constituting a single zone of defence.

The German reconnoitring parties found the conditions very different from those of the Western Front. No-man's land was a wide space, three or four thousand yards across, through which occasional patrols wandered by night and in which the inhabitants cultivated their fields by day. The tranquillity of the countryside was broken only by an occasional splutter of rifle-fire or a few desultory shells. The first care of the Germans had been to remove all the inhabitants so that no tales could be told. Meanwhile enormous

dumps of ammunition, 1,200 rounds for every field and 500 to 600 for every heavy battery, were accumulated.

On the Eve of the Attack.

The delicate question of the command was adjusted in the following manner: the Eleventh Army, Austrian and German troops alike, and their offensive were entrusted to General von Mackensen with Seeckt as his mentor. Mackensen was placed under Conrad and **A.O.K.** But these in turn agreed not to give any orders to Mackensen which had not beforehand been approved by Falkenhayn and **O.H.L.** And then, lest this procedure should be dilatory, it was understood that in practice **O.H.L.** would tell Seeckt what to do direct, the formal orders reaching Mackensen as soon as possible through the prescribed ceremonial channel. Thus Austrian dignity was safeguarded, and no inconvenience arose.

The Eleventh Army had taken over the line by April 28, and on the same day Mackensen issued his warning order that the artillery would open on May 1 and that the assault would follow on May 2. The presence of Germans on the front was discovered by the Russians on the 25th, but no reinforcements were asked for by General Dimitriev. Even patrolling and vigilance seem to have sunk to a low ebb. Says Danilov: "Our right front with its huge salient had many weak places. The Russian army was at the end of its power. The uninterrupted fighting in the Carpathians had cost it heavy losses. The deficit in officers and men in many units was terrifying. The lack of arms and munitions was catastrophic. In these circumstances the troops could still do something against the Austrians, but were incapable of stopping serious pressure from an energetic and determined foe." Such was the situation on the eve of the attack.

Gorlice: The Bombardment.

The German artillery registration began during May 1, and gradually increased throughout the afternoon and night into a harassing fire to prevent the Russians from strengthening their defences. A two-hours' pause was made from 1 to 3 a.m. during the night, to give the German patrols opportunity for reconnaissance, and their engineers time to destroy wire and obstacles.

At 6 a.m. on the 2nd, the four-hour intense preliminary bombardment began. The Russian overhead-cover of earth and sandbags supported on logs was everywhere smashed in by the German howitzers and trench-mortars. When at 9 a.m. the trench-mortars developed their full intensity, the Russian wire and machine-guns flew into the air. At ten o'clock the trench-mortars ceased firing; the German artillery lifted on to the back lines, and through the dust and smoke, thirty or forty thousand assaulting infantry charged at a rapid pace.

Only where there were woods near the front line or where, owing to hilly ground, the bombardment had not done its work, was there any fighting. The front position was carried with a rush, and the Russian counter-attacks were hurled back upon their second line. After hard fighting all through May 2 this was stormed in its turn.

On the 4th, the IIIrd Caucasian Corps sent from the Russian Army Group reserve attempted to counter-attack, but could do no more than cover the retreat. The Eleventh Army, drawing the Austrian armies on either side forward with them, had now broken completely through the Russian front. Dimitriev's army was annihilated. His divisions, after another week's fighting, could scarcely muster 1,000 men a-piece. 140,000 prisoners, 100 guns and 300 machine-guns fell during the whole operation to the victors, while the trenches were choked with dead and wounded. It had once more been proved that the Russian army in its weakened condition could not withstand the troops of any first-class nation. The whole of the Russian Carpathian front now became untenable, and everywhere along 100 miles of hard-won summits and passes, the Eighth, Eleventh and Ninth Russian Armies retreated with the utmost speed, yielding up march after march the fair province which they had invaded nine months before and deemed their own for ever.

CHAPTER XLVIII

AFTER THE LANDING

Effects of the Landing at Home and Abroad—Italy about to Enter the War—The Anglo-Franco-Italian Naval Convention—Resumption of the Allied Offensive in France—A Casualty Clearing Station—Sinking of the *Lusitania*—Consequences—On Board the *Queen Elizabeth*—Admiral de Robeck's Telegram of May 10—New Factors in the Decision—I Wish to Renew the Attack on the Minefields—Lord Fisher's Agitation—His Memorandum of May 11—Disjointed Resolves—Withdrawal of the *Queen Elizabeth*—Lord Kitchener's Anger—An Arrangement Effected.

IN spite of the fact that the army was brought to a standstill, the great event of the landing continued to produce its impression throughout Europe.

Effects of the Landing at Home and Abroad.

Italy, Greece, Roumania and Bulgaria assumed that now that large allied forces were definitely ashore, they could and would be reinforced from the sea until the Turkish resistance was overcome. The Italian momentum towards war proceeded unchecked: and the Balkan states continued in an attitude of strained expectancy. At home the growing political crisis underwent a distinct set-back. The leaders of the Opposition had been advised by high authorities in France that the operation of landing would fail and that the troops would be repulsed at the Beaches with disastrous slaughter. They were of course greatly relieved when these predictions were falsified, and there was for the moment a corresponding easement of tension.

Italy about to Enter the War.

On May 5, while the battle on the Peninsula was still undecided, I had to go to Paris for a purpose of great importance. The negotiations with Italy which had been proceeding during March and April had in its last fortnight assumed a decisive character. On April 26 the Treaty of London, by which Italy agreed to come into the war, had been signed.

On May 4 Italy denounced the Triple Alliance, and thereby made public her change of policy. Sir Edward Grey had on medical advice taken a brief spell of rest at the beginning of April, and the Prime Minister for ten days grasped the Italian business in his own hands with downright vigour. On the Foreign Secretary's return the advantage gained had been zealously pursued. The terms of the secret treaty which resulted in the entry of Italy into the war have long since been made public. They reveal with painful clearness the desperate need of the three Allies at this juncture. Locked in the deadly struggle, with the danger of the Russian collapse staring them in the face, and with their own very existence at stake, neither Britain nor France was inclined to be particular about the price they would pay or promise to pay for the accession to the alliance of a new first-class power. The Italian negotiators, deeply conscious of our anxiety, were determined to make the most advantageous bargain they could for their country.

The territorial gains which Italy was to receive on her frontiers, in the Adriatic, and from the Turkish Empire were tremendous. These political prizes were to be supplemented by Military and Naval conventions of the utmost importance. The British Fleet was actively to co-operate with the Italians in the Adriatic, and the Russians were to continue a vigorous offensive with at least 500,000 men against Austria in Galicia. Thus guaranteed both by sea and land, Italy seemed safe to advance and

appropriate the enormous prizes for which she had stipulated.

The hopes and calculations which inspired these arrangements were soon to be falsified. Those who launch out upon the stormy voyage of war can never tell beforehand what its length or fortunes will be, or in what port they will at last drop anchor. Within a fortnight of the signature of the Military Convention, Mackensen had fallen upon the Russians along the Dunajecs, the battle of Gorlice-Tarnow had been fought, and the Russian Armies were everywhere in retreat and recoil. The apparition of Yugo-Slavia as a strong new power at the end of the war rendered the conditions which Italy had exacted in the Adriatic obviously inapplicable. And lastly Turkey, beaten in the war, has risen resuscitated and virtually intact from the disasters of the peace.

It was not to an easy war of limited liability and great material gains that Italian statesmen were to send their countrymen. Italy, like the other great combatants, was to be drenched with blood and tears. Year after year, her soil invaded, her manhood shorn away, her treasure spent, her life and honour in jeopardy, must she struggle on to a victory which was to bring no complete satisfaction to her ambitions. But though the calculations of statesmen had failed, the generous heart of the Italian nation proved not unequal to the long trials and

From the drawing by F. Matania.

WIRING PARTY ON THE WESTERN FRONT.

The necessary task of erecting barbed wire in front of trench parapets was one requiring both skill and nerve. At points where the opposing lines were but a short distance apart the risks of discovery and death were great. The wiring party in the above drawing has been surprised by an enemy flare, and if its presence is detected the prospect of escape will be remote. In this case wooden posts are being employed, driven into position by a muffled mallet. Later in the war special iron posts were used which greatly facilitated the work of erecting extensive entanglements.

disappointments of the struggle, nor unworthy to sustain amid its mocking fortunes the ancient fame of Rome.

The Anglo-Franco-Italian Naval Convention.

As it seemed vital that no hitch nor delay should obstruct the signing of the Naval Convention, I proceeded to Paris armed on behalf of the Admiralty with plenary powers. The Italian apprehension was that if as the result of victory Russia established herself at Constantinople, and if Serbia also gained a great increase of territory, these combined Slavonic powers would develop a strong naval base on or off the Dalmatian coast. The prospect which had arisen from the Dardanelles operations, of Russia possessing Constantinople, forced Italy to make the greatest exertions to secure her own position in the Adriatic, which would have been irretrievably compromised by an allied victory in which Italy had taken no part. We therefore spent two days in intricate discussions between the French and the Italians about the naval bases which Italy was to secure on the Dalmatian coast in the treaties following a victorious war.

Among these their most important claim was for what was called the Canal of Sabioncello. This strip of good anchorage for the largest vessels between two long islands, out of gunfire from the shore, and half-way down the Adriatic, presented indeed every ideal condition for an Italian naval base. But there were many other claims, and whenever the discussion seemed to prove discouraging to the Italians we threw the British trident into the scale, offering to agree to the request not only for cruisers and flotillas but for a squadron of battleships as well. Since it seemed that Admiral de Robeck had definitely abandoned the attempt to force the Dardanelles, his fleet had clearly ships to spare. In the end a complete agreement was reached between the naval authorities of the three countries. The Italians insisted on having British battleships, and the French without taking offence at this, agreed to replace a British Squadron taken from the Dardanelles by an equal number of their own vessels.

From the drawing by F. Matania.

BOMBING A GERMAN TRENCH.

No sooner had the opposing armies on the Western Front settled down to trench warfare, than it quickly became apparent that the hand grenade would play an important part in every action, great or small. Inventors at home had a busy time, and presently hand and rifle grenades began to make their appearance at the front in a considerable variety of types and designs. Egg bombs and stick bombs, as is shown above, were frequently in use by the same bombing party until the evolution of the Mills Hand Grenade, the perfect weapon of its kind, rendered all other types obsolete.

Resumption of the Allied Offensive in France.

I left Paris early on the morning of

Photo: Newspaper Illustrations.

EXPLOSION OF A LAND MINE.

As has already been shown in the text, the presence of mines at sea presented a menace to the great ships of the Grand Fleet with which it was at all times difficult to cope. No less dangerous was the land mine, cunningly laid at the terminus of an underground passage driven by a tunnelling company, and so sited by means of measurements and bearings that the explosive charge lay directly underneath the enemy. Such a mine could be fired at any time convenient, and in practice the explosion was frequently the precursor of an infantry attack.

the 7th, intending to pass a day at Sir John French's Headquarters on my way back to England. Arrived at St. Omer on the evening of the 7th, I learnt two things. Sir Ian Hamilton's telegrams showed that he was in full battle and that no decision was yet manifest on the Peninsula. Secondly, Sir John French intended to begin a general attack directed against the Aubers Ridge in conjunction with the French Army operating on his right against the Souchez position, and this momentous event was fixed for daybreak on the 9th. I therefore stayed to see one battle, glad to keep my mind off the other.

As the reader is aware, I was at this time convinced that the task set to the British and French troops was impossible. The Germans in their front were almost equal in strength, intensely fortified, and fully prepared. The preliminary wire-cutting by shrapnel bombardment had shown them exactly the gaps through which the assaulting troops were to be launched, and one could not doubt that every preparation had been made to mow them down. Moreover the British supplies of shell were extremely limited, and the high explosive needed to shatter the German trenches was practically non-existent.

I made every effort in my power without incurring unjustifiable risks to view the battle. But neither far off from a lofty steeple nor close up on the fringe of the enemy's barrage was it possible to see anything except shells and smoke. Without actually taking part in the assault it was impossible to measure the real conditions. To see them you had to feel them, and feeling them might well feel nothing more. To stand outside was to see nothing, to plunge in was to be dominated by personal experiences of an absorbing kind. This was one of the cruellest features of the war. Many of the generals in the higher commands did not know the conditions with which

their troops were ordered to contend, nor were they in a position to devise the remedies which could have helped them.

A Casualty Clearing Station.

On the evening of this day I witnessed also the hideous spectacle of a large casualty clearing station in the height of a battle. More than 1,000 men suffering from every form of horrible injury, seared, torn, pierced, choking, dying, were being sorted according to their miseries into the different parts of the Convent at Merville.

At the entrance the arrival and departure of the motor ambulances, each with its four or five shattered and tortured beings, was incessant: from the back door corpses were being carried out at brief intervals to a burying party constantly at work. One room was filled to overflowing with cases not worth sending any farther, cases whose hopelessness excluded them from priority in operations. Other rooms were filled with "walking wounded" all in much pain, but most in good spirits. For these a cup of tea, a cigarette, and another long motor journey were reserved. An unbroken file of urgent and critical cases were pressed towards the operating room, the door of which was wide open and revealed as I passed the terrible spectacle of a man being trepanned. Everywhere was blood and bloody rags. Outside in the quadrangle the drumming thunder of the cannonade proclaimed that the process of death and mutilation was still at its height.

* * * *

Sinking of the *Lusitania*.

In these days also came in the news of the sinking of the *Lusitania*. This gigantic liner had for some months definitely

From a drawing by F. Matania.

IN A BATTALION HEADQUARTERS NEAR YPRES, 1915.

A scene typical of many up and down the British line in France. At no time during the war, save in cases where they had been captured from the enemy, did British soldiers enjoy the security of the concrete caverns so plentiful in the strong German lines. A ruined farmhouse, a corrugated iron shelter covered with a few sandbags or a comparatively shallow dug-out served the purposes of the British troops. At all times eager and expecting to advance they attached but little importance to the safe but permanent structure. As the years passed officers and men alike became increasingly adaptable and able to make for themselves comfortable homes wherever they happened to be.

returned to passenger service, and had made several round trips across the Atlantic in that capacity. In the first week of May she was returning to Liverpool from New York, having on board nearly 2,000 persons all non-combatants, British and American. Included in her cargo was a small consignment of rifle ammunition and shrapnel shells weighing about 173 tons. Warnings that the vessel would be sunk, afterwards traced to the German Government, were circulated in New York before she sailed. On May 4 and 5, while she was approaching the British Isles, German U-boats were reported about the southern entrance to the Irish Channel, and two merchant ships were sunk. Further reports of submarine activity in this area came in on the 6th. In consequence repeated and specific warnings and information were transmitted from the Admiralty wireless station at Valentia.

May 6, 12.5 a.m. To all British ships.

. . . Avoid headlands. Pass harbours at full speed. Steer mid-channel course. Submarines off Fastnet.

May 6, 7.50 p.m. To *Lusitania*.

Submarines active off south coast of Ireland.

May 7, 11.25 a.m. To all British ships.

Submarines active in southern part of Irish Channel. Last heard of south of Coningbeg Lighthouse. Make certain *Lusitania* gets this.

May 7, 12.40 p.m. *To Lusitania.*

Submarines five miles south of Cape Clear proceeding west when sighted at 10 a.m.

All these messages were duly received.

The Admiralty confidential Memorandum of April 16, 1915, contained the following passage :—

" War experience has shown that fast steamers can considerably reduce the chance of successful surprise submarine attack by zigzagging, that is to say, altering the course at short and irregular intervals, say in ten minutes to half an hour. This course is almost invariably adopted by warships when cruising in an area known to be infested with submarines. The underwater speed of a submarine is very low, and it is exceedingly difficult for her to get into position to deliver an attack unless she can preserve and predict the course of the ship attacked."

In spite of these warnings and instructions, for which the Admiralty Trade Division deserve credit, the *Lusitania* was proceeding along the usual trade route without zigzagging at little more than three-quarter speed when, at 2.10 p.m. on May 7, she was torpedoed eight miles off the Old Head of Kinsdale by Commander Schweiger in the German submarine U 20. Two torpedoes were fired, the first striking her amidships with a tremendous explosion, and the second a few minutes later striking her aft. In twenty minutes she foundered by the head, carrying with her 1,195 persons, of whom 291 were women and 94 infants or small children.

Consequences.

This crowning outrage of the U-boat war resounded through the world. The United States whose citizens had perished in large numbers, was convulsed with indignation, and in all parts of the great Republic the signal for armed intervention was awaited by the strongest elements of the American people. It was not given, and the war continued in its destructive equipoise. But henceforward the friends of the Allies in the United States were armed with a weapon against which German influence was powerless, and before which after a lamentable interval cold-hearted policy was destined to succumb.

Even in the first moments of realizing the tragedy and its horror, I understood the significance of the event. As the history of the Great War is pondered over, its stern lessons stand forth from the tumult and confusion of the times. On two supreme occasions the German Imperial Government, quenching compunction, outfacing conscience, deliberately, with calculation, with sinister resolve, severed the underlying bonds which sustained the civilization of the world and united even in their quarrels the human family. The invasion of Belgium and the unlimited U-boat war

From a drawing by F. Matania.

THE TRAGEDY OF THE *LUSITANIA*.

Shortly after 2 p.m. on May 7, 1915, the Cunard liner *Lusitania* was off Queenstown, homeward bound from the United States. She had on board, including her crew, nearly two thousand men, women and children. At about the same time the German submarine U 20, commanded by Commander Schweiger, was in the vicinity, and this officer, about ten minutes past two, fired two torpedoes at the Cunarder, which resulted in the great ship going to the bottom with most of her passengers and crew. This submarine triumph was loudly acclaimed in Germany and equally loudly denounced in America.

were both resorted to on expert dictation as the only means of victory. They proved the direct cause of ruin. They drew into the struggle against Germany mighty and intangible powers by which her strength was remorselessly borne down.

Nothing could have deprived Germany of victory in the first year of war except the invasion of Belgium; nothing could have denied it to her in its last year except her unlimited submarine campaign. Not to the number of her enemies, nor to their resources or wisdom; not to the mistakes of her Admirals and Generals in open battle; not to the weakness of her allies; not assuredly to any fault in the valour or loyalty of her population or her armies; but only to these two grand crimes and blunders of history, were her undoing and our salvation due.

* * * *

On Board the *Queen Elizabeth*.

Meanwhile in the Flagship at the Dardanelles the most vehement discussion had been taking place.

Since March 18, two distinct currents of opinion had flowed in high naval circles. The forward school had been more than ever convinced that the quelling of the forts, the sweeping of the minefield, and ultimately the forcing of the Straits were practicable operations. They had no doubt whatever that the Fleet could make its way through into the Marmora. They had continually impressed upon the Admiral the duty of the Navy to attempt this task. Grieved beyond measure at the cruel losses that the Army had sustained, out of all proportion to anything expected, they felt it almost unendurable that the Navy should sit helpless and inactive after the orders they had received and the undertakings made on their behalf. They therefore pressed their Chief to propose to the Admiralty the renewal of the naval attack.

All these pressures and the spectacle of the Army's torment produced their effect upon a man of the courage and quality of Admiral de Robeck. He finally resolved to send a telegram to the Admiralty expressing his willingness to renew the naval attack. The telegram bears the imprint of several hands and of opposite opinions. But apparently, as we now know, all present at these conferences in the *Queen Elizabeth* believed that the telegram would be followed by immediate orders for battle from the Admiralty. Admiral Guépratte, the French Commander, telegraphed to the Minister of Marine showing that he fully expected to be launched in decisive attack and asking for an additional and stronger ship to reinforce the French Squadron. All the naval staff and commanders rested, therefore, under the impression of a great and sublime decision in pursuance of which they would readily face every risk and endure every loss.

Admiral de Robeck's Telegram of May 10.

Vice-Admiral de Robeck to Admiralty.

May 10, 1915.

The position in the Gallipoli Peninsula.

General Hamilton informs me that the Army is checked, its advance on Achi Baba can only be carried out by a few yards at a time, and a condition of affairs approximate to that in Northern France is threatened. The situation therefore arises, as indicated in my telegram 292 :—

" If the Army is checked in its advance on Kilid Bahr, the question whether the Navy should not force the Narrows, leaving the forts intact, will depend entirely whether the Fleet could assist the Army in their advance to the Narrows best from below Chanak with communications intact or from above cut off from its base."

The help which the Navy has been able to give the Army in its advance has not been as great as was anticipated, though effective in keeping down the fire of the enemy's batteries; when it is a question of trenches and machine guns the Navy is of small assistance; it is these latter that have checked the Army.

From the vigour of the enemy's resistance it is improbable that the passage of the Fleet into the Marmora will be decisive and therefore it is equally probable that the Straits will

be closed behind the Fleet. This will be of slight importance if the resistance of the enemy could be overcome in time to prevent the enforced withdrawal of the Fleet owing to lack of supplies.

The supporting of attack of Army, should the Fleet penetrate to the Sea of Marmora, will be entrusted to the cruisers and certain older battleships including some of the French, whose ships are not fitted for a serious bombardment of the Narrows, this support will obviously be much less than is now given by the whole of the Fleet.

The temper of the Turkish Army in the Peninsula indicates that the forcing of the Dardanelles and subsequent appearance of the Fleet off Constantinople will not, of itself, prove decisive.

The points for decision appear to be :—

First—Can the Navy by forcing the Dardanelles ensure the success of the operations ?

Second—If the Navy were to suffer a reverse, which of necessity could only be a severe one, would the position of the Army be so critical as to jeopardize the whole of the operations ?

New Factors in the Decision.

This message deserved very attentive study. It was clearly intended to raise the direct issue of the renewal of the naval attempt to force the Straits. In it Admiral de Robeck balanced the pros and cons, on the whole with an emphasis on the latter. But at the same time he intimated unmistakably his readiness to make the attempt if the Admiralty gave the order. His telegram caused me much perturbation. I was of course, as always, in favour of renewing the naval attack. But the situation at this moment was very different from what it had been in March and April, and in pursuance of Admiral de Robeck's decision of March 22 we were now following another line of policy. Three important events had taken place.

First, the army had been landed on the Gallipoli Peninsula with a loss of nearly 20,000 men. That army was, it is true, arrested, but Lord Kitchener had told me that he intended to reinforce it with the whole Army Corps for which Sir Ian Hamilton had asked. The landing under fire had always been the feature in the operation most to be dreaded. It had been accomplished, and it seemed that since the Turks had not been able to prevent the landing, they would certainly fail to stop the further advance of the Army, if the ample reinforcements which were available were rapidly poured in. There were, therefore, at this moment reasonable prospects of carrying the military operation through to success if adequate military reinforcements were sent with promptitude.

Secondly, Italy was about to enter the war. The Anglo-Italian Naval Convention which we had just signed obliged us to send four battleships and four light cruisers to join the Italian Fleet in the Adriatic. I had undertaken this on the basis which had ruled ever since March 22 that Admiral de Robeck had definitely abandoned the naval attack and that we were committed to fight the issue out by military force. The withdrawal of these ships from Admiral de Robeck's fleet, although mitigated by French reinforcements, was incompatible with a decision to make a determined or even desperate effort to force the Dardanelles by ships alone.

Thirdly, what we had so long dreaded had at last come to pass. The German submarines had arrived in the Ægean. One or perhaps two, or even three, were reported on different occasions in the neighbourhood of the Dardanelles. The position of the *Queen Elizabeth* became one of exceptional danger, and the security of the whole Fleet at the Dardanelles was affected to an extent which could not be readily measured. Moreover, if the Fleet succeeded in forcing the passage and arrived in the Marmora, it would be harassed in that sea by German submarines. Though this fact was not conclusive, the action of the Fleet would be impeded and, on the assumption that the Straits closed up behind it, its effective strategic life would be to a certain extent curtailed.

Furthermore, the responsibilities of the Fleet now that the army was landed and heavily engaged were very greatly increased. As Admiral Oliver pithily

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

THE LANDING STAGES OF LANCASHIRE LANDING (1).

The scene of the gallant exploits of the 1st Bn. The Lancashire Fusiliers who landed here shortly after 6 a.m. on the morning of April 25, 1915. In the interval between that fine feat of arms and the month of May, Lancashire Landing, or "W" Beach, was, by reason of its suitability for the purpose, transformed into a landing place for stores and reinforcements.

put it—"On March 18 the Fleet was single, now it has a wife on shore."

I wish to renew the Attack on the Minefields.

All these considerations were present in my mind. Their cumulative effect was very great. Of course if Admiral de Robeck continued willing to make a decisive attack, it would be possible in a few weeks to recreate the conditions which would enable him to do so. Our naval resources were enormous and increasing almost daily. We could by the middle of June have raised his Fleet to a greater strength than ever, and have perfected in every detail the preparations for the attempt. Moreover, by then we should have known where we stood with the German submarines in the Ægean and what that menace amounted to. For the moment, however, the arguments against decisive naval action were very weighty.

On the other hand, I was extremely anxious for a limited operation. I wished the Fleet to engage the forts at the Narrows, and thus test the reports which we had received about the shortage of ammunition. Under cover of this engagement I wished the Kephez minefield to be swept and got out of the way. These were perfectly feasible operations now that the mine-sweeping force was thoroughly organized, and the Dardanelles fleet, although reduced, was ample for their purpose. The elimination of the Kephez minefield would in itself begin to imperil the communications of the army the Turks were building up on the Peninsula.

Lord Fisher's Agitation.

I could see, however, that Lord Fisher was under considerable strain. His seventy-four years lay heavy upon him. During my absence in Paris upon the negotiations for the Anglo-Italian Naval Convention he had shown great nervous exhaustion. He had evinced unconcealed distress and anxiety at being left alone in sole charge of the Admiralty. There is no doubt that the old Admiral was worried almost out of his wits by the immense pressure of the times and by the course events had taken. Admiral de Robeck's telegram distressed him extremely. He expected to be confronted with the demand he hated most and dreaded most, the

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

THE LANDING STAGES OF LANCASHIRE LANDING (2).

The long stretch of beach, sheltered from the Turkish lines by cliffs, in which most of the officers and men employed on the beach had their abodes, was an admirable dumping ground for fodder, rations and water. Unfortunately the beach could be fired upon from the Asiatic shore, and it became necessary, by means of a system of signals, to warn the workers on the beaches each time the Asiatic guns were observed to fire.

renewal of the naval battle and fighting the matter out to a conclusion.

On the morning of the 11th we discussed the situation together. I endeavoured repeatedly to make it clear that all I wanted was the sweeping of the Kephez minefield under cover of a renewed engagement of the forts at the Narrows, and that I had no idea of pressing for a decisive effort to force the Straits and penetrate the Marmora. However, I failed to remove his anxieties. No doubt he felt that if the operation were successful, the case for the main thrust in a subsequent stage would be enormously strengthened ; and no doubt this was true. The Kephez minefield was his as well as the Turks' first line of defence.

His Memorandum of May 11.

After our conversation, Lord Fisher sent me on the same day "with much reluctance" a formal memorandum which presented a full and forceful restatement of his views of the Dardanelles operations, leading to the conclusion that he could not

. . . under any circumstances be a party to any order to Admiral de Robeck to make an attempt to pass the Dardanelles until the shores have been effectively occupied . . . I therefore wish it to be clearly understood that I dissociate myself from any such project.

I replied on the same day that he would never receive from me any proposition to "rush" the Dardanelles, and that I agreed with his views on the subject. I returned to the possibility that Admiral de Robeck might be called upon to engage the forts and sweep the Kephez minefield as an aid to the military operations. Expressing again my hope that any real issue would always find us united, I appealed to him—

. . . We are now committed to one of the greatest amphibious enterprises in history. You are absolutely committed. Comradeship, resource, firmness, patience, all in the highest degree will be needed to carry the matter through to victory. . . .

He wrote me next day that since my reply had not definitely repudiated the idea of a naval attack on the minefield before the army had occupied the shores

of the Narrows, he had sent the Prime Minister a copy of his memorandum to me.

With reference to your remark that I am absolutely committed, I have only to say that you must know (as the Prime Minister also) that my unwilling acquiescence did not extend to such a further gamble as any repetition of March 18 until the Army had done their part.

Disjointed Resolves.

Thus it will be seen that never after March 22 were the Admiralty and the Naval Commander-in-Chief able to come to a simultaneous resolve to attack. On the 21st all were united. Thereafter, when one was hot the other was cold. On March 23 and 24 the Admiralty without issuing actual orders pressed strongly for the attack, and the Admiral on the spot said "No." On May 10 the Admiral on the spot was willing, but the Admiralty said "No." On August 18, under the impression of the disaster at Suvla Bay, the Admiralty raised the question again and authorized the Admiral to use his old battleships to the fullest extent, and the Admiral met them by a reasoned but decisive refusal. Lastly, in the advent of the final evacuation Admiral Wemyss, who had succeeded to the command, armed with plans drawn up in the most complete detail by Commodore Keyes for forcing the Straits, made vehement appeals for sanction to execute them: and this time the Admiralty refused.

* * * *

The bad news which came in from Russia, from France, and from the Dardanelles at this time, and the impression I had sustained while with the army, led me to issue the following general minute to all Admiralty Departments:—

Secretary and Members of the Board.

May 11, 1915.

Please inform all heads of Departments in the Admiralty, that for the present it is to be assumed that the war will not end before December 31, 1916. All Admiralty arrangements and plans should be prepared on this basis, and any measures for the strengthening of our naval power, which will become effective before that date, may be considered. This applies to all questions of personnel, ships, armaments and stores, and to the organization and maintenance of the Fleet and Dockyards, which must be adapted to a long period of continually developing strength without undue strain. I await proposals from all departments for the development and expansion of their activities.

W. S. C.

* * * *

Withdrawal of the *Queen Elizabeth*.

On the night of May 12 the *Goliath* was torpedoed and sunk in the Dardanelles by a Turkish destroyer manned by a German crew. This event determined Lord Fisher to bring the *Queen Elizabeth* home, and he made upon me a most strenuous counter-demand to that effect. I did not myself object to this. The first two 14-inch gun Monitors (then named *Stonewall Jackson* and *Admiral Farragut*) were now ready; and I agreed with the First Sea Lord that the *Queen Elizabeth* should return, if they and other monitors, two battleships of the "Duncan" class, and certain additional vessels, were sent to replace her. He was very much relieved at this and was grateful. The position into which we had got was most painful. He wished at all costs to cut the loss and come away from the hated scene. I was bound, not only by every conviction, but by every call of honour, to press the enterprise and sustain our struggling army to the full.

Lord Kitchener's Anger.

I had now to break the news to Lord Kitchener. I invited him to come to a conference at the Admiralty on the evening of May 13. We sat round the octagonal table; Lord Kitchener on my left, Lord Fisher on my right, together with various other officers of high rank. As soon as Lord Kitchener realized that the Admiralty were going to withdraw the *Queen Elizabeth*, he became extremely angry. His habitual composure in trying ordeals left him. He protested vehemently against what he considered the desertion of the army at its most critical moment. On the other side Lord Fisher flew into an even greater

fury. "The *Queen Elizabeth* would come home; she would come home at once; she would come home that night, or he would walk out of the Admiralty then and there."

Could we but have exchanged the positions of these two potentates at this juncture, have let Kitchener hold the Admiralty to its task, and sent Fisher to the War Office to slam in the reinforcements, both would have been happy and all would have been well.

An Arrangement Effected.

Such solutions were beyond us. I stood by my agreement with the First Sea Lord, and did my utmost to explain to Lord Kitchener that the monitors would give equally good support with far less risk to naval strength. I recounted to him the vessels we were sending, and offered him the most solemn guarantees—in which I was supported by the Naval Staff—of our resolve to sustain the army by the most effectual means. I thought he was to some extent reassured before he left.

I therefore agreed with Lord Fisher in a series of telegrams. We instructed Admiral de Robeck to send the *Queen Elizabeth* home with all dispatch and utmost secrecy. We informed him that *Exmouth* and *Venerable* would join his command at once, and before the end of the month he would have the first two monitors, the last word in bombarding vessels; their gain would more than compensate for the loss of the *Queen Elizabeth*. The first six monitors as delivered would be sent to him. As soon as the French Squadron under his command had been raised to a total of six battleships, he was to send the *Queen, London, Implacable* and *Prince of Wales* under Rear-Admiral Thursby—also with utmost secrecy—to Malta in readiness for service with the Italian Fleet in the Adriatic, in order to meet the provisions of the Anglo-Italian Naval Convention. We informed Admiral de Robeck that we thought the moment for an independent naval attempt to force the Narrows had passed, and would not arise again under existing conditions; accordingly, his rôle was to support the army in its advance.

On these telegrams—the last we ever sent together—Lord Fisher and I parted for the night.

Photo: Central News.

DESPATCH RIDERS ON GALLIPOLI.

The despatch rider's lot whilst on duty at Helles was the reverse of uneventful. In carrying orders and messages to and from the various headquarters he was required to ride his motor-bicycle over rough roads, long stretches of which were under observation from the Turkish trenches. Not infrequently an unfortunate message bearer could be seen, driving at speed, pursued by shells from the slopes of Achi Baba.

CHAPTER XLIX

THE FALL OF THE GOVERNMENT

The War Council of May 14, 1915—Mr. Churchill and the *Queen Elizabeth*—On Fears of Invasion—After the Council—The Italian Crisis—Dispatch of the British Cruisers—Resignation of Lord Fisher—A Difficult Situation—A New Combination—The Issue in the House of Commons—Interview with the Prime Minister—Sortie of the High Seas Fleet—The Naval Situation at Dawn on May 18—Progress of the Political Crisis—Sir Arthur Wilson's Letter—Vindication—The Italian Declaration of War against Austria—Lord Fisher's Ultimatum—Formation of the First Coalition Government—A Visit of Ceremony—Sir Arthur Wilson's Refusal—My Letter to Mr. Balfour—I Leave the Admiralty—The Naval Position—The Inheritance—Great Naval Leaders.

THE War Council of May 14 was sulphurous.

The War Council of May 14, 1915.

We were in presence of the fact that Sir Ian Hamilton's army had been definitely brought to a standstill on the Gallipoli Peninsula, was suspended there in circumstances of peril, was difficult to reinforce, and still more difficult to withdraw. The Fleet had relapsed into passivity. Lord Fisher had insisted on the withdrawal of the *Queen Elizabeth:* German submarines were about to enter the Ægean, where our enormous concentrations of shipping necessary to support the Dardanelles operations lay in a very unprotected state. At the same time the failure of the British attacks in France on the Aubers Ridge was unmistakable. Sir John French's army had lost nearly 20,000 men without substantial results, and General Headquarters naturally demanded increased supplies of men and ammunition. The shell crisis had reached its explosion point—the shortage had been disclosed in *The Times* that morning—and behind it marched a political crisis of the first order. The weakness and failure of Russia were becoming every month more evident. Intense anxiety and extreme bad temper, all suppressed under formal demeanour, characterized the discussion.

Lord Kitchener began in a strain of solemn and formidable complaint. He had been induced to participate in the Dardanelles operations on the assurances of the Navy that they would force the passage. Now they had abandoned the attempt. Most particularly had his judgment been affected by the unique qualities of the *Queen Elizabeth.* Now she was to be withdrawn: she was to be withdrawn at the very moment when he had committed his army to a great operation on the Gallipoli Peninsula, and when that army was struggling for its life with its back to the sea. Lord Fisher at this point interjected that he had been against the Dardanelles operations from the beginning, and that the Prime Minister and Lord Kitchener knew this fact well.

This remarkable interruption was received in silence. The Secretary of State for War then proceeded to survey other theatres of the war in an extremely pessimistic mood. The army in France was firing away shells at a rate which no military administration had ever been asked to sustain. The orders which had been placed for ammunition of every kind were all being completed late. The growing weakness of Russia might at any time enable the Germans to transfer troops to the west and resume the offensive against us. Thirdly, he proceeded to dilate upon

the dangers of invasion. How could he tell what would happen? Great Britain must be defended at all costs, all the more if other affairs miscarried. In these circumstances he could not send Sir John French the four new divisions he had promised him: they must be reserved for home defence.

Mr. Churchill and the *Queen Elizabeth*.

When he had finished, the Council turned to me—almost on me. I thereupon spoke in the sense of the series of arguments with which the reader should now be familiar. If it had been known three months before that an army of from 80,000 to 100,000 men would be available in May for an attack on the Dardanelles, the attack by the Navy alone would never have been undertaken. Though matters had gone badly in many quarters and great disappointments had been experienced, there was no reason for despondency or alarm, still less to make things out worse than they were or to take unreasonable action.

The naval operations at the Dardanelles did not depend and had never depended upon the *Queen Elizabeth*. They had been planned before it was known that she would go. She was now to be withdrawn because of the danger of submarines to so invaluable a ship. She would be replaced by monitors and other specially designed vessels better suited in many respects to bombarding operations and largely immune from submarine attack. The naval support of the army would in no way be affected. It was no good exaggerating the value of the *Queen Elizabeth*, or supposing that a great operation of this kind could turn on a single vessel.

As for the shell shortage, that would remedy itself if we made the greatest exertions and did not meanwhile embark on premature offensives without adequate superiority in men, guns or ammunition.

On Fears of Invasion.

Lastly, what was this talk about invasion? The Admiralty did not believe that any landing in force could be effected; still less, if effected, that it could be sustained and nourished. What grounds were there for supposing that the enemy, now fully committed to the eastward effort against Russia, would spin round and bring troops back to invade England or attack the Western Front? And how many would they bring, and how long would it take? Stop these vain offensives on the Western Front until the new armies were ready and sufficient ammunition was accumulated. Concentrate the available reinforcements upon the Dardanelles and give them such ammunition as was necessary to reach a decision there at the earliest possible moment. Discard these alarms about the invasion of an island no longer denuded of troops as in 1914, but bristling with armed men and guarded by a fleet far stronger relatively than at the beginning of the war and possessed of sources of information never previously dreamed of. Let Sir John French have the new divisions for which he had asked, but otherwise remain on the defensive in France.

I am not quoting the actual words in either case, but their gist. The sense is fully sustained by the abbreviated records. These considerations appeared to produce a definite impression upon the Council. We separated without any decision. My arguments were, however, accepted almost in their entirety by the Coalition Administration which came into existence a few weeks later, and every one of the suppositions on which they rested was vindicated by events. The departure of the *Queen Elizabeth* did not prevent the naval support of the army at Gallipoli nor its supply by sea. The British and French offensives in France continued to fail for the next three years with ever-increasing bloody slaughter and the fruitless destruction of our new armies. The Germans did not and could not arrest their drive against Russia, which was in fact on the eve of its full intensity. They did not come back to the west, nor was it physically possible for them to do so for many months to come. They did not invade England: they never thought of invading England

at this period, nor could they have done it had they tried.

However, events were now to supervene in the British political sphere which were destined fatally to destroy the hopes of a successful issue at the Dardanelles and preclude all possibility of a speedy termination of the war.

After the Council.

After the Council I wrote the following letter to the Prime Minister which I think shows exactly where I stood :—

Mr. Churchill to the Prime Minister.
May 14, 1915.

I must ask you to take note of Fisher's statement to-day that "he was against the Dardanelles and had been all along," or words to that effect. The First Sea Lord has agreed in writing to every executive telegram on which the operations have been conducted; and had they been immediately successful, the credit would have been his. But I make no complaint of that. I am attached to the old boy and it is a great pleasure to me to work with him. I think he reciprocates these feelings. My point is that a moment will probably arise in these operations when the Admiral and General on the spot will wish and require to run a risk with the Fleet for a great and decisive effort. If I agree with them, I shall sanction it, and I cannot undertake to be paralysed by the veto of a friend who whatever the result will certainly say, "I was always against the Dardanelles."

You will see that in a matter of this kind *someone* has to take the responsibility. I will do so—provided that my decision is the one that rules—and not otherwise.

It is also uncomfortable not to know what Kitchener will or won't do in the matter of reinforcements. We are absolutely in his hands, and I never saw him in a queerer mood—or more unreasonable. K. will punish the Admiralty by docking Hamilton of his divisions because we have withdrawn the *Queen Elizabeth*; and Fisher will have the *Queen Elizabeth* home if he is to stay.

Through all this with patience and determination we can make our way to one of the great events in the history of the world.

But I wish now to make it clear to you that a man who says, "I disclaim responsibility for failure," cannot be the final arbiter of the measures which may be found to be vital to success.

* * * *

I spent the afternoon completing my proposals for the naval reinforcement of the Dardanelles and for the convoying of the two divisions with which I understood and trusted Sir Ian Hamilton was to be immediately reinforced.

Although there could be very little doubt about what naval reinforcements were needed, I did not want the demands to fall upon Lord Fisher with a shock. I therefore went into his room in the evening to talk over the whole position with him. Our conversation was quite friendly. He did not object to any of the particular measures proposed, but as usual he did not like the steady and increasing drain on our resources and the inflection given to our campaign by the growing demands of the Dardanelles. I then said to him that it was really not fair for him to obstruct the necessary steps at the Dardanelles and then, if there was a failure, to turn round and say, "I told you so, I was always against it." He looked at me in an odd way and said, "I think you are right—it isn't fair." However, he accepted the minutes and we parted amicably.

* * * *

The Italian Crisis.

Into this extraordinary period, when intense situations succeeded each other with dazing rapidity, another event was now to break. Following the method which I had adopted since Lord Fisher came to the Admiralty, I resumed work in my room at about 10 o'clock that night. The Italian crisis was at its height. The Italian Government had resigned in consequence of the opposition to Italy entering the war, and this enormous and brilliant event which we had re-

By courtesy of Brig.-General D. H. Drake-Brockman, C.M.G., from the painting by J. P. Beadle.

NEUVE CHAPELLE, MARCH 10, 1915.

This fine picture is entitled "Neuve Chapelle, March 10, 1915: 2nd Rifle Brigade and 29th Garhwal Rifles clearing the village." The battle of Neuve Chapelle opened at 7.30 a.m. on March 10, 1915, the destruction of the German obstacles and trenches being entrusted to the artillery of the Indian Corps. By 8.50 a.m. the attack had progressed sufficiently to bring the assaulting troops to the village itself, and at that hour Neuve Chapelle was entered by the 2nd Bn. The Rifle Brigade, who are seen here cleaning up after the attack.

garded as almost settled more than a fortnight before, now appeared once again to be thrown into the melting-pot.

A little before midnight the Italian Naval Attaché, an officer ardently devoted to the cause of the Allies, asked to see me. He was accompanied by Admiral Oliver, who had a file of papers. The Naval Attaché said that the uncertainty and convulsions now prevailing in Rome made it vital that the arrangements for naval co-operation which had been conceived a week before in Paris should be brought into immediate effect. Under these arrangements we were to send *inter alia* four light cruisers to reinforce the Italian Fleet in the Adriatic. These cruisers were to reach Taranto by daybreak on the 18th. The Naval Attaché urged that their arrival should be accelerated. If they could arrive by the morning of the 16th, definite naval co-operation between Great Britain and Italy would be an accomplished fact, and this fact might well be decisive.

Dispatch of the British Cruisers.

As I had myself negotiated the Naval Convention with Italy in Paris, I was of course fully acquainted with every detail. I had procured the First Sea Lord's agreement to all its terms, including the dispatch of the four cruisers. These cruisers had been detailed. Fisher's green initial directing their movement was prominent on the second page of the file. No question of principle was involved by accelerating their

departure by forty-eight hours. It did not come within the limits of the working arrangement which Fisher and I had made with each other, viz. to take no important step except in consultation. It never occurred to me for a moment that it could be so viewed, nor did the Chief of the Staff suggest that we should wake up the First Sea Lord. He would begin his letters at about 4 o'clock in the morning and he would get the file then. I therefore approved the immediate dispatch of these cruisers and wrote, as I had done in similar cases before, "First Sea Lord to see after action."

For more than ten years I believed that this phrase was the spark that fired the train. We are assured however by Lord Fisher's biographers that he never saw the Italian paper until after he had resigned. Admiral Bacon in his *Life of Lord Fisher*, basing himself upon the first-hand evidence of Captain Crease, states explicitly that the fact that I had on this night proposed to the First Sea Lord the sending of two more submarines to the Dardanelles in addition to the reinforcements we had agreed upon in the evening, was "the last straw." If this be true the pretext is not the less scanty.

But the cause behind the pretext was, as these pages may perhaps have shown, substantial. The old Admiral, walking in the early morning, saw himself confronted again with the minutes proposing the reinforcements for the Dardanelles which he knew he could not resist. He saw himself becoming ever more deeply involved in an enterprise which he distrusted and disliked. He saw that enterprise quivering on the verge of failure. He saw a civilian Minister, to whom indeed he was attached by many bonds of friendship, becoming every day a hard and stern taskmaster in all that was needed to sustain the hated oper-

Photo: Copyright.

FIRING A TRENCH TORPEDO.

Trench torpedoes and trench mortars of various types were among the best-hated weapons employed on any front. They varied in size from the small but quick-firing Stokes gun to trench guns or mortars which were capable of lobbing heavy missiles into an enemy trench. The above illustration is of an aerial torpedo fitted with wings to enable it to maintain a straight course. The presence of a trench mortar, as soon as its whereabouts was located by the enemy, was quite sufficient to bring down upon the heads of the infantry a severe rain of shells from the enemy artillery.

ation. He saw the furious discontents of the Conservative Party at the shell shortage and the general conduct of the war. He saw a Field-Marshal in uniform at the head of the War Office, while he, whose name was a watchword throughout the country, was relegated to a secondary place, and in that place was compelled by arguments and pressures he had never been able to resist, but had never ceased to resent, to become responsible for operations to which he had taken an intense dislike. The hour had come.

* * * *

Resignation of Lord Fisher.

When I awoke the next morning, Saturday, I received no morning letter from the First Sea Lord. This was unusual, for he nearly always wrote me his waking thoughts on the situation. I had to go over to the Foreign Office at about nine o'clock and was kept there some time. As I was returning across the Horse Guards' Parade, Masterton-Smith hurried up to me with an anxious face—"Fisher has resigned, and I think he means it this time." He gave me the following note from the First Sea Lord:—

First Lord.

May 15, 1915.

After further anxious reflection I have come to the regretted conclusion I am unable to remain any longer as your colleague. It is undesirable in the public interests to go into details—Jowett said, "never explain"—but I find it increasingly difficult to adjust myself to the increasing daily requirements of the Dardanelles to meet your views—as you truly said yesterday I am in the position of continually veto-ing your proposals.

This is not fair to you besides being extremely distasteful to me.

I am off to Scotland at once so as to avoid all questionings.

Yours truly,

FISHER.

I did not, however, at first take a serious view. I remembered a similar letter couched in terms of the utmost formality earlier in the year on the air raids, and he had threatened or hinted resignation both in letters and in conversation on all sorts of matters, big and small, during the last four or five months. I was pretty sure that a good friendly talk would put matters right. However, when I got back to the Admiralty I found that he had entirely disappeared. He was not in the building; he was not in his house. None of his people knew where he was except that he was going to Scotland at once. He had sent a communication to the other Sea Lords which they were engaged in discussing at a meeting of their own.

A Difficult Situation.

I went over to the Prime Minister and reported the facts. Mr. Asquith immediately sent his Secretary with a written order commanding Lord Fisher in the name of the King to return to his duty. It was some hours before the First Sea Lord was discovered. He refused point-blank to re-enter the Admiralty or to discharge any function. He reiterated his determination to proceed at once to Scotland. He was, however, at length persuaded to come and see the Prime Minister. I was not present at the interview. After it was over Mr. Asquith told me that he thought he had shaken him in his intention, but that he was very much upset. He advised me to write to him, adding, "If you can get him back, well and good; but if not it will be a very difficult situation."

I tried my best. Again and again I had persuaded him by the written word. It was useless.

YOU, he replied, ARE BENT ON FORCING THE DARDANELLES AND NOTHING WILL TURN YOU FROM IT—NOTHING. I know you so well! I could give you no better proof of my desire to stand by you than my having remained by you in this Dardanelles business up to this last moment against the strongest conviction of my life as stated in the Dardanelles Defence Committee Memorandum.

You will remain and I SHALL GO—It is better so. Your splendid stand on my behalf I can never forget when you took your political life in your hands,

From the painting by W. B. Wollen. Copyright reserved for owner by Royal Academy Illustrated.

THE CANADIANS AT YPRES.

This spirited picture has for its subject the magnificent fighting qualities displayed by the Canadians during the operations which followed upon the German gas attack in April, 1915. The retirement of the French Colonial troops on the Canadian left exposed a flank, and the Canadians fought desperately and successfully to maintain their positions. The Canadian troops, in the years to follow, were to give many more proofs of their quality, but in the battle before Ypres in April, 1915, they built up a reputation which they worthily upheld until Armistice Day, 1918.

and I really have worked very hard for you in return—*my utmost*—but here is a question beyond all personal obligations. I assure you it is only painful having further conversations. I have told the Prime Minister I will not remain. I have absolutely decided to stick to that decision. Nothing will turn me from it. You say with much feeling that *it will be a very great grief to you to part from me*—I am certain you know in your heart no one has ever been more faithful to you than I have since I joined you last October. *I have worked my very hardest.*

A New Combination.

It was no use persisting, and I turned to consider new combinations. I was by no means sure that I should not be confronted with the resignation of the other three Sea Lords. On the Sunday morning, however, I learned that Sir Arthur Wilson had been consulted by the Sea Lords and that he had informed them that it was their duty to remain at their posts and that no case for resignation had arisen. I was led by this fact to ask Sir Arthur Wilson whether he would be willing himself to fill the vacancy of First Sea Lord. He asked for an hour to consider the matter, and then to my gratification, and I will add surprise, he informed me that he would do so.

By Sunday at noon I was in a position to reconstitute the Board of Admiralty in all respects. I then motored down to the Prime Minister, who was in the country. I told him that Lord Fisher's resignation was final, and that my office was at his disposal if he required to make a change. He said, "No, I have thought of that. I do not

wish it, but can you get a Board?" I then told him that all the other Members of the Board would remain, and that Sir Arthur Wilson would take Lord Fisher's place. I understood him to assent to this arrangement. Later his private secretary mentioned in conversation that the situation resulting from the shell shortage disclosure and the resignation of Lord Fisher was so serious that the Prime Minister thought the Unionist leaders would have to be consulted on the steps to be taken. I saw from this that the crisis would not be by any means confined to the Admiralty. Mr. Asquith asked me to stay and dine, and we had a pleasant evening amid all our troubles. I returned that night to London.

On Monday morning I asked Mr. Balfour to come to the Admiralty. I told him Lord Fisher had resigned, and that I understood from the Prime Minister that he would approve the reconstructon of the Board of Admiralty with Sir Arthur Wilson as First Sea Lord. I told him Sir Arthur Wilson was willing to accept office and that all the other Members of the Board would remain. I said if these arrangements were finally approved by the Prime Minister that afternoon, I would make an immediate announcement to the House of Commons and court a debate.

Mr. Balfour was indignant at Lord Fisher's resignation. He said that it would greatly disturb his Unionist friends and that he would himself go and prepare them for it and steady their opinion. Nothing could exceed the kindness and firmness of his attitude. I spent the rest of the morning preparing my statement for Parliament, expecting a severe challenge but also to be successful. I still had no knowledge whatever of the violent political convulsions which were proceeding around me and beneath me.

The Issue in the House of Commons.

I went down to the House with the list of my new Board complete, fully prepared to encounter the debate. Before seeing the Prime Minister I looked into the Chancellor of the Exchequer's room. Mr. Lloyd George

From the drawing by C. Caton Woodville.

RECAPTURING THE GUNS.

One result of the German gas attack was the temporary evacuation of a wood on the Canadian left after that flank had been exposed. A battery of 4·7 guns had perforce to be abandoned for the time being. Before the captured guns could be removed the 10th Bn. Canadian Infantry and the 16th Bn. Canadian Scottish carried out a counter-attack, in the course of which the Germans were driven from the wood at the point of the bayonet and the 4·7's recaptured.

THE WORK OF THE ROY

The officers and men of the Royal Army Service Corps of necessity carry out much of th the infantrymen in the trenches. The task of conducting a column of supply waggons a In the picture given here a heavy shell has burst in the middle of a transport column, and a order and getting the supplies forward is likely to be one of difficulty. In face of incide with their job and rarely failed to deli

then made to me the following disclosure. The leaders of the Opposition were in possession of all the facts about the shell shortage and had given notice that they intended to demand a debate. The resignation of Lord Fisher at this juncture created a political crisis. Mr. Lloyd George was convinced that this crisis could only be surmounted by the formation of a national Coalition Government. He had accordingly informed the Prime Minister that he would resign unless such a Government were formed at once. I said that he knew I had always been in favour of such a Government and had pressed it at every possible opportunity, but that I hoped now it might be deferred until my Board was reconstituted and in the saddle at the Admiralty. He said action must be immediate.

Interview with the Prime Minister.

I then repaired, as had been arranged, to the Prime Minister. He received me with great consideration. I presented him with the list of the new Board. He said, "No, this will not do. I have decided to form a national Government by a coalition with the Unionists, and a very much larger reconstruction will be required." He told me that Lord Kitchener was to leave the War Office, and then added, after some complimentary remarks, "What are we to do for you?"

I saw at once that it was decided I should leave the Admiralty, and I replied that Mr. Balfour could succeed me there with the least break in continuity; that for several months I had made him a party to all our secrets and to everything that was going forward; and that his appointment would be far the best that could be made. The Prime Minister seemed deeply gratified at this suggestion, and I saw that he already had it in his mind. He reverted to the personal question. "Would I take office in the new Government, or would I prefer a command in France?"

At this moment the Chancellor of the Exchequer entered the room. The

From the drawing by Philip Dadd.

RMY SERVICE CORPS.

ork in the back areas. Frequently, however, they confront dangers as great as any facing orses along shell-swept roads is one calling for the highest qualities of courage and leadership. likely to be followed by others the task of the officer commanding the column in restoring ch as this, all looked upon as in the day's work, the Royal Army Service Corps carried on e supplies entrusted to their charge.

Prime Minister turned to him. Mr. Lloyd George replied, "Why do you not send him to the Colonial Office? There is a great work to be done there." I did not accept this suggestion, and the discussion was about to continue when the door again opened and a secretary entered with the following message for me: "Masterton-Smith is on the telephone. Very important news of the kind that never fails has just come in. You must come back to the Admiralty at once." I repeated this information to my two colleagues and quitted them without another word.

Sortie of the High Seas Fleet.

It took only five minutes to get to the Admiralty. There I learned that the whole German Fleet was coming out. All its three Battle Squadrons, both Scouting Groups and 70 destroyers were involved. A message from the German Commander-in-Chief to the Fleet contained the phrase "Intend to attack by day." The political crisis and my own fate in it passed almost completely out of my mind. In the absence of the First Sea Lord, I sent for Admiral Oliver, the Chief of the Staff, and the Second Sea Lord, Sir Frederick Hamilton, and we together issued orders for the Grand Fleet and all other available forces to proceed to sea. I was determined that our whole power should be engaged if battle were joined, and that the enemy's retreat should be intercepted. At 8 o'clock that evening when the complex business of co-ordination had been virtually completed, I telegraphed to Sir John Jellicoe:—

It is not impossible that to-morrow may be The Day. All good fortune attend you.

A detailed review of our available strength showed that the position at the moment was exceptionally good. Our margins were everywhere at their maximum. I requested Sir Arthur Wilson and the Second Sea Lord, Sir Frederick Hamilton, to sleep in the Admiralty at my house in order that we might be ready in concert to face the crisis which

the dawn might bring. I did not return to the House of Commons but remained continuously in the Admiralty. Late that evening a red box came round from the Prime Minister enclosing a note stating that he had determined to form a Coalition Government and requesting all Ministers to place their resignations in his hands that same night. I complied with this request, adding :—

. . . I am strongly in favour of a National Government, and no personal claims or interests should stand in its way at the present crisis. I should be sorry to leave the Admiralty, where I have borne the brunt, but should always rely on you to vindicate my work here.

Having dispatched this, I went to bed. In the morning I had prepared for a Parliamentary ordeal of the most searching character; in the afternoon for a political crisis fatal to myself; in the evening for the supreme battle on the sea. For one day it was enough.

* * * *

The Naval Situation at Dawn on May 18.

With the earliest daylight I went down to the War Room. From 3 a.m. onwards our directional stations had begun to pick up the enemy Fleet. The German Fleet Flagship was found to have been in Lat. 53° 50′ N., Long. 4° 20′ E., at 2.9 a.m. She was thus some 126 miles westward of Heligoland and about 40 miles from Terschelling Island. All the Fleets were at sea. The Grand Fleet with its attendant squadrons and flotillas was hastening to the southward. Commodore Tyrwhitt with the Harwich flotillas, reinforced by the Dover destroyers and supported by eleven submarines, was off the Texel watching the narrow seas. It was only in southern waters that the enemy could strike an effective blow, such as attempting to block Calais or Boulogne. If this were their purpose the Harwich Force could either have attacked them by night, or drawn them into pursuit to the southward by day over a line of submarines. If by any means the German Fleet could be delayed in southern waters, the opportunity would be afforded to the Grand Fleet of blocking their return to German ports, either off Terschelling or by the eastern route into the Heligoland Bight. The situation after dawn was therefore for some time of the highest interest.

We got no further indication of the enemy's movements till 7 a.m. It then appeared that he had altered course and was steering south-east instead of west. All our faces fell together. Unless he turned again towards us, we should not be able to scoop him into our net. The morning wore on amid confusing indications. At 9 o'clock we learned that the German light cruiser *Danzig* had met with an accident—presumably from a mine—in 50° 40′ N., 7° 5′ E. Gloom settled on the War Room. This was much nearer the German coast. At last, at about half-past ten, it became certain that the German Fleet was on its way home. It had in fact—as far as we now know—been covering the laying of the minefields on the Dogger Bank which came into existence from this date. This operation being completed, the German Fleet re-entered the Heligoland Bight before our submarines could reach their intercepting position. The episode was over. All our fleets, squadrons and flotillas turned morosely away to resume their long-drawn, unrelenting watch, and I woke again to the political crisis.

Progress of the Political Crisis.

But my hour had passed, and during the afternoon, and still more the following day, I learned from a sure source that my position was being viewed with increasing disfavour by those into whose hands power had now fallen. I was not included in their conclaves, which proceeded with the utmost animation from hour to hour. The Unionist leaders on coming to the aid of the nation at this juncture made no conditions as to policy, but stipulated for half the places and patronage. Mr. Asquith had therefore to dispense with half his former colleagues. Those whose actions in the conduct of the war were held to have produced this disagreeable result were naturally the object of resentment in Liberal circles. Up till Monday night it had been determined that Lord

Kitchener should be transferred from the War Office to some great position similar to that of Commander-in-Chief; but on Tuesday it was realized that his hold on the confidence of the nation was still too great for any Government to do without him. On Wednesday, Mr. Asquith issued the reassuring statement that both Lord Kitchener and Sir Edward Grey would remain in their respective posts.

On Friday the 21st, when Lord Northcliffe published an attack upon the War Minister of a vehement character, there was a spontaneous movement of public anger in many parts of the country, and the offending newspaper was burned upon the Stock Exchange. In the wake of these emotions it was natural that the vacant Garter should be bestowed upon Lord Kitchener, and he was at the same time awarded the Grand Cordon of the Belgian Order of Leopold. His rehabilitation was therefore complete. I alone was held to blame for all the upheaval and its discontents.

* * * *

Sir Arthur Wilson's Letter.

The more serious physical wounds are often surprisingly endurable at the moment they are received. There is an interval of uncertain length before sensation is renewed. The shock numbs but does not paralyse: the wound bleeds but does not smart. So it is also with the great reverses and losses of life. Before I had realized the intensity with which political irritation was being focused on me, I had resigned myself to leaving the Admiralty. But on the Wednesday evening an incident occurred which profoundly affected my feelings and judgment. One of the Sea Lords informed me that Sir Arthur Wilson, who had already provisionally assumed the duties of First Sea Lord, had written to the Prime Minister declining to serve under any First Lord except me.

Sir Arthur Wilson to the Prime Minister.

May 19, 1915.

DEAR MR. ASQUITH,—

In view of the reports in the papers this morning as to the probable reconstruction of the Government, I think I ought to tell you that although I agreed to undertake the office of First Sea Lord under Mr. Churchill because it appeared to me to be the best means of maintaining continuity of policy under the unfortunate circumstances that have arisen, I am not prepared to undertake the duties under any new First Lord, as the strain under such circumstances would be far beyond my strength.

Believe me,
Yours truly,
A. K. WILSON.

This utterly unexpected mark of confidence from the old Admiral astounded me. His reserve had been impenetrable. I had no idea how he viewed me and my work. Certainly I never counted on the slightest support or approbation from him.

Vindication.

I was greatly disturbed and now found it very hard indeed to leave the Admiralty. In the midst of general condemnation, violent newspaper censures, angry Lobbies, reproachful colleagues, here at any rate was a judge—competent, instructed, impartial—who pronounced by action stronger than words not merely an acquittal but a vindication.

I knew well the profound impression which Sir Arthur Wilson's action, had it been made public, would have produced upon the Naval Service. It would instantly have restored the confidence which press attacks, impossible to answer, had undermined. In no other way could the persistent accusations of rash, ignorant interference by the civilian Minister in the naval conduct of the war be decisively repelled. I felt myself strong enough with this endorsement to carry forward to eventual success the great operations to which we were committed. I felt that working with Wilson and Oliver, the First Sea Lord and the Chief of the Staff linked together as they were, we should again have re-established that unity, comradeship and authority at the summit of the Admiralty with which alone the risks could be run and the

exertions made which were indispensable to victory. The information which had reached me was confidential and could not then be disclosed to the public by me. It was not disclosed by the Prime Minister.

The Italian Declaration of War against Austria.

I am confident that had the Prime Minister, instead of submitting to the demand of the Chancellor of the Exchequer to form a Coalition Government, laid the broad outlines of his case, both naval and military, before both Houses of Parliament in Secret Session, he and the policy he was committed to would have been supported by large majorities. The impressive recital of all that the War Office had achieved under Lord Kitchener would greatly have mitigated the complaints on what had been neglected. I am sure I could have vindicated the Admiralty policy. Moreover, on May 23, towering over domestic matters, came the Italian declaration of War against Austria.

The Prime Minister's personal share in this event was a tremendous fact. I am certain that had he fought, he would have won; and had he won, he could then with dignity and with real authority have invited the Opposition to come not to his rescue but to his aid. On such a basis of confidence, comradeship and respect, a true national coalition could have been formed to carry on the war, and Mr. Asquith would have been spared that interlude of distrustful colleagues, of divided or more often mutually paralysing counsels and of lost opportunities, which reached its end in December, 1916.

I wish here to record the opinion that Parliament is the foundation upon which Governments should rely, and that the House of Commons in particular has a right to be informed and consulted on all great occasions of political change. The only safe course is that men engaged as members of a Cabinet in an agreed and common policy should stand or fall by a vote of the House of Commons taken after full debate. Departure from these simple fundamental principles led to a disastrous breakdown, at a most critical moment, of the whole machinery for carrying on the war. It led to delay in taking urgent action, which delay, as will presently appear, was fatal in its consequences.

* * * *

Lord Fisher's Ultimatum.

It was only when Mr. Asquith's *Memoirs* appeared in 1928 that Lord Fisher's ultimatum to the Government was made public. Nothing could more clearly, or more cruelly, expose the mental distress and wild excitement into which the strain of war had plunged the old Admiral. Nothing could portray more vividly the volcano upon which I had been living and upon which grave decisions of war and policy had been pursued.

Lord Fisher had written :—

"If the following six conditions are agreed to, I can guarantee the successful termination of the war, and the total abolition of the submarine menace.

"I also wish to add that since Lord Ripon wished, in 1885, to make me a Lord of the Admiralty, but at my request made me Director of Naval Ordnance and Torpedoes instead, I have served under nine First Lords and seventeen at the Admiralty, so I ought to know something about it.

"(1) That Mr. Winston Churchill is not in the Cabinet to be always circumventing me. Nor will I serve under Mr. Balfour.

"(2) That Sir A. K. Wilson leaves the Admiralty, and the Committee of Imperial Defence, and the War Council, as my time will be occupied in resisting the bombardment of Heligoland and other such wild projects. Also his policy is totally opposed to mine, and he accepted the position of First Sea Lord in succession to me, thereby adopting a policy diametrically opposed to my views.

"(3) That there shall be an entire new Board of Admiralty as regards the Sea Lords and the Financial Secretary (who is utterly useless). New measures demand New Men.

"(4) That I should have complete

professional charge of the war at sea, together with the sole disposition of the Fleet and the appointment of all officers of all ranks whatsoever.

"(5) That the First Lord of the Admiralty should be absolutely restricted to Policy and Parliamentary Procedure, and should occupy the same position towards me as Mr. Tennant, M.P., does to Lord Kitchener (and very well he does it).

"(6) That I should have the sole absolute authority for all new construction and all dockyard work of whatever sort whatsoever, and complete control over the whole of the Civil Establishments of the Navy.

(Initialled) F.

19.5.15.

"P.S.—The 60 per cent. of my time and energy which I have exhausted on nine First Lords in the past I wish in the future to devote to the successful prosecution of the war. That is the sole reason for these six conditions. These six conditions must be published verbatim so that the Fleet may know my position.

Photo: Copyright.

THE FORERUNNER OF THE "PILL-BOX."

In the early days of the war certain of the German trenches were strengthened at intervals by the erection of armoured casemates from which light guns were fired. As the war progressed the idea was developed until the whole front was studded with similar erections constructed of reinforced concrete and employed as shelters for machine-gun crews. These "pill-boxes," as they were called, presented a stiff problem to attacking infantry as they were difficult to destroy by artillery fire and the crews within were able to man their guns to the last.

It is needless to say that this amazing document was answered only by the curt acceptance of Fisher's resignation.

* * * *

Formation of the First Coalition Government.

The formation of the new Government proceeded haltingly. Although by what was naïvely called a "Self-Denying Ordnance" it was agreed between the party leaders that no Member of Parliament on either side who was serving at the Front should be included in the Administration, the adjustment of party and personal claims raised at numerous points obstinate difficulties. Though I was left alone at the Admiralty, I was fully informed of every phase in this intricate and by no means entirely edifying process. It is no part of my purpose to unfold these matters here: their chronicle may be safely left to the Grevilles and Crokers, of which posterity, and possibly even

our own generation, are not likely to be destitute.

A Visit of Ceremony.

It was during this interval that I had the honour of receiving a visit of ceremony from Lord Kitchener. I was not at first aware of what it was about. We had differed strongly and on a broad front at the last meeting of the War Council. Moreover, no decision of any importance on naval and military affairs could be taken during the hiatus. We talked about the situation. After some general remarks he asked me whether it was settled that I should leave the Admiralty. I said it was. He asked what I was going to do. I said I had no idea; nothing was settled. He spoke very kindly about our work together. He evidently had no idea how narrowly he had escaped my fate. As he got up to go he turned and said, in the impressive and almost majestic manner which was natural to him, "Well, there is one thing at any rate they cannot take from you. The Fleet was ready." After that he was gone. During the months that we were still to serve together in the new Cabinet I was condemned often to differ from him, to oppose him and to criticize him. But I cannot forget the rugged kindness and warm-hearted courtesy which led him to pay me this visit.

Sir Arthur Wilson's Refusal.

By the 21st it was decided that Mr. Balfour was to come to the Admiralty. In accordance with what I knew were the Prime Minister's wishes, I endeavoured to persuade Sir Arthur Wilson to serve under him. He remained obdurate. No arguments would move him. He was at some pains to explain that his decision arose out of no personal consideration for me, but solely because he felt he could not undertake the burden without my aid. All the same, there seemed to be a quite unwonted element of friendliness in his demeanour, and this was proved a year later during the Parliamentary inquiry into the Dardanelles. Not only did he then give evidence which was of the greatest possible assistance to me, but he drew up in a single night a cogent paper on the technical gunnery aspects of the plan we had followed, and cast his ægis and authority over an enterprise which everybody was by then eager to condemn.

On the evening of the 21st I reported to the Prime Minister:—

"I have tried very hard but without success to persuade Sir Arthur Wilson to hold himself at Mr. Balfour's disposition. In these circumstances I would advise Sir Henry Jackson."

This proposal was adopted, and meanwhile the process of Cabinet-making gradually completed itself. Mr. Asquith was good enough to offer me the Chancellorship of the Duchy of Lancaster. This office is a sinecure of much dignity. I should certainly not have felt able to accept it but for the fact that he coupled with it the promise that I should be a member of the War Council, or War Committee, of the Cabinet. I felt that thus situated I should be able to bring whatever knowledge I had acquired to the service of the Dardanelles expedition, and that it was my duty to aid and succour it by any effective means still left to me. I remained in the new Government so long as this condition was observed.

It was not till the 26th that the full list of the Government was announced and Ministers changed offices and kissed hands. The interval was full of anxiety. No councils were held on war matters and all questions of policy had necessarily to be reserved for the decision of the new Cabinet. No more troops were sent to the Dardanelles, and only day-to-day decisions could be taken. There was no First Sea Lord. In these circumstances I did the best I could.

My Letter to Mr. Balfour.

Early on the morning of the 26th—my last at the Admiralty—arrived the sinister news that the *Triumph* had been torpedoed and sunk at the Dardanelles by a German submarine. However, my task was over, and before setting out for Buckingham Palace I wrote the following letter to the states-

man on whom the burden of Admiralty affairs was now placed :—

Mr. Churchill to Mr. Balfour.

May 26, 1915.

I leave you one task of great difficulty which requires your immediate attention, viz. the protection of the Dardanelles fleet against submarine attack. Do not underrate the gravity of this danger. Unless it can be coped with, there are no limits to the evil consequences. For nearly a fortnight I have not had the authority to make important decisions. Your fresh mind and calm judgment will give the impulse which is necessary. I set out the following notes for what they are worth :—

1. The military operations should proceed with all possible speed, so that the period of danger may be shortened. Whatever force is necessary, can be spared and can be used, should be sent at once, and all at once.

2. Until decisive operations on land can be resumed, the Fleet must remain in the safety of Mudros harbour—or the Suez Canal. Such ships as are required to cover the troops should, until the netted lighters arrive, be protected by colliers and empty transports lashed alongside.

3. As soon as possible ships must be provided which are immune from torpedo attack. As specified in my minute of the 13th instant to the First Sea Lord, the nine heavy monitors should go out as soon as each is ready; and the four "Edgars" which have been fitted with bulges, and which supply the medium battery for bombarding purposes, should be sent at once. Nearly a fortnight has been lost in regard to the "Edgars" by the interregnum here. Until these vessels arrive, and while no decisive land operations are in progress, the exposure of ships should be kept to the absolute minimum.

4. At least 100 trawlers and drifters, with 100 miles of indicator net, and eight more destroyers (which should on the way out escort transports) should be sent; in addition to all the other measures which have been taken, and of which you will be told.

5. The protection against submarines must take the form of developing a great netted area around the tip of the Gallipoli Peninsula, occupied by large numbers of armed trawlers and seaplanes always ready. I want to emphasize the fact that action must be drastic and on a large scale. Much has been done already.

6. The measures to watch and net the mouth of the Adriatic, and to search for submarine bases in Asia Minor, to mine-in likely bases, to develop a system of intelligence regardless of expense, all of which are now in progress, must be pressed forward.

7. Punishment must be doggedly borne.

From the bottom of my heart I wish you success in this and all other anxious business which has been thrust upon you, and which you have so loyally and courageously undertaken.

* * * *

I Leave the Admiralty.

Thus ended my administration of the Admiralty. For thirty-four months of preparation and ten months of war I had borne the prime responsibility and had wielded the main executive power. The reader who has persevered thus far in this account will realize the difficulties that were coped with, the hazards that were encountered, the mistakes that were made, and the work that was done. Dubious years, many misfortunes, enormous toils, bitter disappointments, still lay before the Royal Navy. But I am entitled at this point in the story to place on record the situation and condition in which the mighty instrument of our sea power and of our salvation passed into the hands of my successors.

The Naval Position.

At no moment during all the wars of Britain had our command of the seas been more complete, and in no previous war had that command been asserted more rapidly or with so little loss. Not only had the surface ships of the enemy been extirpated from the oceans of the world; not only in the North Sea had his fleets

and squadrons been beaten, cowed and driven into port; but even the new and barbarous submarine warfare had been curbed and checked. For more than a year to come the German High Seas Fleet scarcely quitted its harbours, and even when they did so, it was with no intention of fighting a battle and in the unfounded hope that they could return unperceived or unmolested. For eighteen months their submarine campaign was virtually suspended. In spite of modern complications, the economic blockade of Germany was established and maintained, so far as it rested with the Navy, with the utmost strictness: scarcely any ship that the Navy had authority to touch ever passed our far-spread cordons.

The maintenance of the armies in France and in the east proceeded every month on a vaster scale, without the slightest substantial hindrance upon their communications becoming apparent to our commanders at the Front. The mercantile fleets of Britain and her allies moved with freedom in all directions about the seas and oceans; and an insurance rate of 1 per cent. left a substantial profit to the Government Fund. These conditions lasted during all the year 1915 and up to the last quarter of the year 1916. There never was in all the history of war such an unchallenged reign of sea power.

The Inheritance.

Meanwhile the British Navy was growing continually and rapidly in strength. The fruits of the exertions which had been made before and since the outbreak of the war were being reaped with each successive month. Battleships, battle-cruisers, light cruisers in dozens, submarines in scores, destroyers in hundreds, small craft in thousands, were being armed and built, and were coming into commission in an unceasing and broadening tide.

The manning arrangements to meet this enormous new construction were perfected for a year in advance. Every requirement known to the naval science of the day in guns, in torpedoes, in shells, in explosives, in propellant, in coal, in oil, and in auxiliary services had been foreseen and provided for in harmonious relation to the expansion of our naval power.

At the Admiralty we were in hot pursuit of most of the great key inventions and ideas of the war; and this long in advance of every other nation, friend or foe. Tanks, smoke, torpedo-seaplanes, directional wireless, cryptography, mine fenders, monitors, torpedo-proof ships, paravanes—all were being actively driven forward or developed. Poison gas alone we had put aside—but not from want of comprehension. Even for the new submarine campaign, not to burst upon us for nearly eighteen months, the principal safeguarding measures had already been devised: the multitudes of vessels were building; the decoy ships were at work.

Great Naval Leaders.

Moreover the true war leaders of the Navy had already emerged from the ranks of peace-time merit; and in Beatty, Keyes, Tyrwhitt, Pakenham, and I must add Lewis Bayly—though under a temporary cloud—we had masters of the storm capable of rivalling upon the seas and against the enemy's coasts the exploits of the famous sailor figures of the past. There remained only to devise and perfect those schemes of naval offensive which in spite, and indeed by means of, modern science and invention would have liberated the pent-up skill and daring of our officers and men. There was also at hand that prolonged interlude of ease and tranquillity upon salt water in which every plan could be worked out with sure and deliberate study.

From all this reward and opportunity Fisher, by his own impulsive fatal act, and I, through causes which these pages expose, were for ever disinherited. We lingered on, helpless spectators, until the period of halcyon weather came fearfully to an end and the very life of the State was plunged again into supreme hazard on the seas.

CHAPTER L

THE DARKENING SCENE

A Defective War Instrument—First Meeting of the Dardanelles Committee—A Belated Decision—Duality of Opinion—Consequences of Delay—On the Gallipoli Peninsula—Action of June 4—Action of June 28—Failure of the Supply of British Drafts—Scarcity of Artillery Ammunition—Admiral von Usedom's Reports to the German Emperor—Measures Against the U-Boat Attack—British Submarines in the Marmora—Exploits and Adventures—Nasmith and Boyle—The Nagara Anti-Submarine Net—Twenty-Seven Epic Voyages—The Turkish Sea Communication Cut—The Actual Facts—A Misleading Telegram.

THE new Administration met for the first time on May 26.

A Defective War Instrument.

From the very outset its defects as a war-making instrument were evident. The old Ministers had made an accommodation with their political opponents not on their merits but under duress. The new Ministers were deeply prejudiced against the work which their predecessors had done. Had they been responsible they would no doubt have made a somewhat different series of mistakes. The Unionists had little confidence in the Prime Minister. Indeed, one of the questions they had most anxiously debated was whether they would assent to his remaining at the head of the Government. Mr. Lloyd George, the powerful politician whose action had compelled the formation of the Coalition, found himself on the morrow of his success in a position of singular weakness. He had ceded the Exchequer to Mr. McKenna, and found in the new Cabinet, so largely his creation, an array of Conservative notables who regarded his political record with the utmost aversion.

Mr. Bonar Law, the Leader of the Conservative Party in the House of Commons, might well have expected this dominant post, and although he was not himself affected by personal considerations, much soreness remained among his friends. Whereas practically all the important matters connected with the war had been dealt with in the late Government by four or five Ministers, at least a dozen powerful, capable, distinguished personalities who were in a position to assert themselves had now to be consulted.

The progress of business therefore became cumbrous and laborious in the last degree, and though all these evils were corrected by earnest patriotism and loyalty, the general result was bound to be disappointing. Those who had knowledge had pasts to defend; those free from war commitments were also free from war experience. At least five or six different opinions prevailed on every great topic, and every operative decision was obtained only by prolonged, discursive and exhausting discussions. Far more often we laboured through long delays to unsatisfactory compromises. Meanwhile the destroying war strode remorselessly on its course.

Although without executive power, I was treated with much consideration by the new Cabinet. I continued to sit in my old place on Lord Kitchener's left hand. I was nominated to serve on the committee of nine Ministers which, under the title of the Dardanelles Committee, was virtually the old War Council. I was invited to prepare statements on the situation, both naval and general, and every facility was placed at my disposal by the Admiralty for marshalling and checking the facts. Lord Kitchener was also desired to

present to the new Cabinet similar statements from the War Office standpoint. These papers were prepared with the utmost dispatch.

First Meeting of the Dardanelles Committee.

Meanwhile the education of the new Ministers in the inside and central point of view and their initiation in the secret and special information at the disposal of the Government continued. Opinion declared itself increasingly favourable to the prosecution of the enterprise at the Dardanelles and generally in the sense of the views which I had set forth on the military problem. It was not, however, until the afternoon of June 7 that the first meeting of the Dardanelles Committee was convened. It was composed of:—The Prime Minister, Lord Kitchener, Lord Lansdowne, Mr. Bonar Law, Mr. Balfour, Lord Curzon, Lord Selborne, Lord Crewe, and myself.

Mr. Lloyd George, though a member, was not present on this occasion. Indeed from this time forward and for some months he immersed himself in the production of munitions, and concentrated his whole energies upon the task.

The Committee addressed itself to the requests for reinforcements contained in Sir Ian Hamilton's telegram of May 17. Lord Kitchener pronounced with the utmost decision in favour of prosecuting the campaign at the Dardanelles with the greatest vigour. He declared that he would reinforce Sir Ian Hamilton with three divisions of the New Army in addition to the Lowland Territorial Division, which had already been dispatched under orders issued before the interregnum. He stated that he could not consent to remain responsible for the conduct of the war if it were decided to abandon the attack upon the Gallipoli Peninsula. The Council accepted this clear guidance not merely with relief but with satisfaction. Opinion was unanimous. The following conclusions were recorded:—

"1. To reinforce Sir Ian Hamilton with the three remaining divisions of the First New Army with a view to an assault in the second week of July.

"2. To send out the following naval units, which should be much less vulnerable to submarine attack than those under Admiral de Robeck's command:—

"*Endymion* and *Theseus* [light cruisers of the 'Edgar' class just fitted with bulges].

"Four monitors with 14-inch guns.

"Six monitors with 9·2-inch guns.

"Four monitors with 6-inch guns, and one of the latter to follow later.

"Four sloops.

"Two 'E' Class submarines, now *en route*.

"Four 'H' Class submarines."

A Belated Decision.

Thus the naval measures decided on by the new Board of Admiralty and the new War Council were in principle the same, slightly extended, as those which had been previously pressed by me upon Lord Fisher on the eve of his resignation. The military decisions were, however, on a far larger scale than any which Lord Kitchener had countenanced hitherto. Besides the two divisions which it was in contemplation to send on May 17 and May 30 respectively (one of which had already gone), two others were added; and of the four divisions so assigned to Sir Ian Hamilton, three were to be divisions of the New Army, which was considered, perhaps unjustly, superior to the Territorial divisions at this period.

The conclusions of the Dardanelles Committee of June 7 were brought before the Cabinet on the 9th; and a very hot discussion arose on the general principle of whether the Dardanelles enterprise should be persevered in, or whether we should "cut our loss" and come away. This was, in fact, going over the whole process by which the Dardanelles Committee had arrived at their conclusions. The sense of the Cabinet on the whole was however clearly with the Committee, and in the end it was agreed that the three divisions should go as reinforcements to Sir Ian Hamilton.

Photo: Captain C. Jackson, A.F.C., late A.I.F., and R.A.F.

IN A TRENCH AT ANZAC.

This picture of officers and other ranks at Anzac has been included to show the type of trench common everywhere on Gallipoli. Trench furniture, such as duck-boards, timber revetments, timber, iron or concrete dugouts were rarely seen. Sandbags, however, there were in plenty, and these, combined with the firm nature of the soil, enabled a sound type of trench to be constructed which endured well so long as dry weather obtained.

Duality of Opinion.

There was however from the outset to the end a duality of opinion in the Cabinet which, although it did not follow party lines, resembled a party cleavage, and at every stage in the rest of the Dardanelles operations caused serious embarrassment. Had the Prime Minister possessed or been able to acquire plenary authority, and had he been permitted to exercise it during May and June without distraction or interruption, it is my belief, based upon daily acquaintance with these transactions, that he would have taken the measures which even at this stage would have resulted in securing a decisive victory. But from the moment of the formation of the Coalition power was dispersed and counsels were divided, and every military decision had to be carried by the same sort of process of tact, temporizing, and exhaustion which occurs over a clause in a keenly contested Bill in the House of Commons in time of peace. These facts

Photo: Captain C. Jackson, A.F.C., late A.I.F., and R.A.F.

STEEL LOOPHOLE PLATE.

As has been commented upon earlier in this account the marksmanship of both Turks and the Imperial forces during the Gallipoli campaign was of a high order. Casual firing over the sandbagged parapet was suicidal. In consequence of this, shell loophole plates were in common use and were instrumental in saving many lives. The specimen shown above bears the marks of many Turkish bullets, and it is obvious that an Australian sniper, firing without this protection, would speedily have lost his life.

are stated not with a view of making reproaches where all were equally sincere and equally well-meaning, but to explain the melancholy turn of events.

We had now at length got on June 9 the kind of decisions which were necessary to carry the enterprise through to success. There was no *military* reason of any kind why the decisions which were reached on June 7 and June 9 should not have been taken within forty-eight hours of Sir Ian Hamilton's telegram of May 17. All the facts necessary to the decision were equally available on that date; all the troops were equally available; all the arguments were equally clamant. But from causes in which the enemy had no part, which arose solely from the confusion into which the governing instrument in this country had been thrown, from a fortnight to three weeks were lost for ever.

Consequences of Delay.

The consequences were momentous. Time was the dominating factor. The extraordinary mobility and unexpectedness of amphibious power can, as has been shown, only be exerted in strict relation to limited periods of time. The surprise, the rapidity, and the intensity of the attack are all dependent on the state of the enemy's preparations at a given moment. Every movement undertaken on one side can be matched by a counter-movement on the other. Force and time in this kind of operation amount to almost the same thing, and each can to a very large extent be expressed in terms of the other. A week lost was about the same as a division. Three divisions in February could have occupied the Gallipoli Peninsula with little fighting. Five could have captured it after March 18. Seven were insufficient at the end of April, but nine might just have done it. Eleven might have sufficed at the beginning of July. Fourteen were to prove insufficient on August 7. Moreover, one delay breeds another.

Photo: Captain C. Jackson, A.F.C., late A.I.F., and R.A.F.

MEN OF AN INDIAN MOUNTAIN BATTERY.

Mountain artillery batteries saw much service during the Gallipoli, Sinai and Palestine campaigns, in all of which they rendered gallant service. Mountain batteries are normally equipped with light pieces of ordnance which can be rapidly taken to pieces and transported on mule transport. They are of special value, as their name implies, in hilly country, being able to establish themselves in positions which the heavier guns could not reach. This photograph was taken during the operations at Anzac Cove in 1915.

The date of the next great attack on the Gallipoli Peninsula was governed by two factors—the arrival of the new army, and to a lesser extent by the state of the moon. It was considered that a surprise landing at a fresh point could best be effected on a moonless night. If therefore the dark period of July was missed, the operation in the particular form adopted must stand over till the similar period in August.

It will be seen by reference to the decisions of the Dardanelles Committee on June 7 that they contemplated an attack in the second week of July, and believed that the three new divisions would all have arrived by then. This would have been the most favourable moment. It could certainly have been achieved if the decision had been taken promptly on the receipt of Sir Ian Hamilton's telegram, or, if pending a general decision on policy, the dispatch of reinforcements by divisions could have proceeded while the Government were considering the matter.

But as it was, the troops that it was now decided to send did not or could not arrive in time for a July attack. The three New Army divisions did not, in fact, finish arriving until July had ended. Thus the great battle at Anzac and Suvla Bay was fought in the second week of August, instead of, as would have been perfectly practicable, in the early part of July. During the month that was thus lost, i.e. from the beginning of July to the beginning of August, *ten new Turkish divisions,* or their equivalents, besides important drafts, according to our now certain knowledge, reached the defenders of the Peninsula, and thus our new divisions, which we had at last decided to send, and which if sent in time would have given us a good superiority, were equated and cancelled out before they got to the spot. Moreover, in the interval our land forces were greatly wasted and reduced by sickness

and casualties, and the Fleet was exposed to continuous danger from submarines.

The Germans acquired an ever-increasing control of the Turkish Army, and the whole methods of defence were in consequence far better organized. The defeats of the Russians in Galicia during June and July produced a marked change in the fighting spirit of the Turks on the Peninsula. The removal from Batoum of General Istomine's army, which was thrown into the main Russian battlefields, liberated the considerable forces which the Turks had been forced to keep concentrated at or near Midia to guard against a landing there. Before June was half over it became clear that the reinforcements could not reach the Dardanelles in time for a July battle. The second week in August was the earliest date when the troops would be there, and the nights would be moonless.

All these considerations were present in my mind and filled me with intense anxiety about the issue of the next great effort. I therefore laboured by every means open to me to secure even larger reinforcements and above all accelerated dispatch.

* * * *

On the Gallipoli Peninsula.

While Ministerial changes and Cabinet discussions had been taking place at home, the situation at the Dardanelles and on the Gallipoli Peninsula had passed through several critical phases. On May 19 the Turks, having received news of the arrival of German submarines, made a most determined and serious effort to drive the Anzacs into the sea. The attack, in which four divisions comprising 30,000 Turkish infantry took part, was maintained for many hours both in darkness and in daylight. It was completely and decisively repulsed at every point. When it ceased the Turks had lost at least 5,000 men, and 3,000 of their dead lay in front of the Anzac trenches. The British loss, on the other hand, did not exceed 600. On the morrow the Turkish Commander asked for an armistice to bury the dead and collect the wounded, and this was conceded by Sir Ian Hamiton.

"After May 19," said the Turkish War Office when the war was over, "it was realised that the British defence at Anzac was too strong to enable us to effect anything against it without heavy artillery with plenty of ammunition, and since our own position was also very strong in defence, two weak divisions were left in the trenches and the other two were withdrawn."

The position at Anzac was henceforward unchallenged.

Action of June 4.

On June 4 a general attack was delivered by the British and French along the whole front at Helles. In this action the 29th Division, the 42nd Division, the 2nd Naval Brigade and both French Divisions took part. The Allied forces numbered about 34,000 infantry and the Turks 25,000. Despite a woeful deficiency in artillery and ammunition, the British troops stormed the trenches of the Turkish centre. The French gained ground on the right; but were afterwards driven back by counter-attacks. This exposed the flank of the Naval and 42nd Divisions who were in succession compelled to yield up the greater part of their gains. In the end the general line of the Allies was advanced by no more than two or three hundred yards.

The battle was costly for both sides. The Turkish losses amounted to 10,000, and those of the British alone to an equal number. As in all the battles on the Peninsula, the issue hung in a trembling balance. The Turks were thrown into such confusion that on only two kilometres of their front no less than twenty-five battalions (or parts of battalions) were mingled in the line without any higher organization. In these straits the Turkish Divisional Commander reported that no further British attack could be resisted. In a heated conference the Turkish Chief-of-the-Staff advised the withdrawal of the whole front to Achi Baba. It was only with the greatest difficulty and by the enemy's good luck that the intermingled troops were re-

lieved by a fresh Turkish division on the night of June 7.

On June 21 another important action was fought by the French Corps, which attacked with great spirit on the right of the Helles Front, captured the Haricot Redoubt, and made a substantial advance. A portion of these gains were wrested from them the next day by a Turkish counter-attack.

Action of June 28.

A week later, June 28, the British being reinforced by the 52nd Division, made a general attack on the left of the Helles Front. Five lines of trenches were captured, and an advance of about 1,000 yards was secured. The Turkish force engaged comprised 38,000 infantry with 16 field and 7 heavy batteries. The fire of the ships was, on this occasion, found to be most effective, and the success of the attack again led to critical discussions at the Turkish Headquarters. The German General, Weber, now commanding the southern zone, wished to withdraw the whole front to the Kilid Bahr Plateau. Liman von Sanders, however, overruled him and demanded instead a speedy counter-attack. For this purpose, two fresh Turkish divisions were brought into the line, and a fierce surprise assault was delivered before dawn on July 5. The Turks were repulsed with a loss of 6,000 men.

Failure of the Supply of British Drafts.

"The affair of the 28th," said General Callwell in his cool and instructed account of the Campaign,[1] "following closely Gouraud's stroke on the opposite flank seemed to suggest that if there had been a plentiful reserve to throw into the scale at this juncture on the Helles Front, this might have proved the psychological moment for initiating a determined effort to secure Krithia, the high ground beyond that coveted village, and even possibly Achi Baba itself; no such reserves were, however, available." The paralysis of the British Executive during the formation of the Coalition Government and the education of its new Ministers had effectually withheld this boon.

A third attack along the whole front was delivered with such ammunition and troops as could be found on July 12-13. The general line was advanced from 200 to 400 yards, but no important results were obtained. It had been evident from the beginning of July that considerable reinforcements were reaching the Turks. On the other hand, the British Army was woefully reduced by wastage and casualties. Already by the middle of May, after the first battles, the infantry of Sir Ian Hamilton's five divisions were 23,000 men, or 40 per cent. below their war establishment. These deficiencies were never overtaken by the drafts supplied by the War Office. The 52nd Division and various minor reinforcements dribbled in during June, but did little more than keep pace with the wastage. While the new divisions were on the sea, the old divisions were dwindling. During the whole of May, June and July, the total of the British Forces on the Peninsula and at Anzac never exceeded 60,000 men.

Scarcity of Artillery Ammunition.

Even more discouraging than depleted battalions was the scarcity of ammunition. "During the months of June and July," said General Simpson-Baikie—who commanded the British Artillery[1]—"the total number of rounds of 18-pdr. ammunition at Cape Helles never reached 25,000. Before one of our attacks it used to reach its maximum, which was about 19,000 to 23,000. The total amount of 18-pdr. therefore was limited to about 12,000 rounds, as it was necessary to keep 6,000 to 10,000 rounds in reserve to guard against Turkish counter-attacks. As there was no high explosive shell for the 18-pdr. (except 640 rounds expended on June 4) only shrapnel could be used, and it is well-known that shrapnel is but little use for destroying hostile trenches." On July 13 only 5,000 rounds for the field artillery remained at Helles, and all active operations had, perforce, to be suspended.

[1] Major-General Sir C. E. Callwell: *The Dardanelles*, p. 160.

[1] *Gallipoli Diary*, Appendix I, 281; Statement of Major-General Simpson-Baikie.

The weight of field-gun ammunition available to prepare and support the British assaults in any of these battles on the Peninsula never exceeded 150 tons. For the purpose of judging the scale of the artillery preparation, this may be compared with over 1,300 tons fired in the first two days of the battle of Loos at the end of September in the same year; and with upwards of 25,000 tons often fired in two days during the August offensive of 1918. The rifle and machine-gun fire of the defence on each occasion remained a constant factor. Hard tasks were therefore set to the troops in Gallipoli, and the fact that the issue hung continually in the balance is the measure of their bravery and devotion.

* * * * *

Admiral von Usedom's Reports to the German Emperor.

The fact that during all this period the British Fleet neither attacked nor threatened the forts at the Narrows nor attempted to sweep the minefields enabled the German and Turkish Commanders to draw upon the medium and mobile artillery which defended the Straits for the purpose of succouring the Fifth Turkish Army in its desperate struggle. The first transferences began on April 27. On May 23 Admiral von Usedom, who on April 26 had assumed command of the Fortress of the Dardanelles and of all the Marine Defences of the Straits, reported to the Emperor that he had up to that date, under protest, already yielded to the Army the following artillery :—

Six 8·2-inch mortars, eight 6-inch field howitzers, two 4·7-inch quick-firing field howitzers, nine 4·7-inch field howitzers, twelve 4·7-inch siege guns, and twelve field guns. In all forty-nine pieces.

During June and July the Fifth Turkish Army in its distress made ever-increasing inroads upon the artillery defence of the Straits. Admiral von Usedom's letters to the Emperor reveal his anxiety at this denudation of the marine artillery, and also the dire need of German ammunition, not only for the fortress system, but also for the Fifth Army. "Without ammunition from Germany," he wrote, "the army could hold the enemy only a short time; Turkey must spare no effort to get German ammunition through the Balkan countries."

These efforts met with no success and on August 16 Admiral von Usedom reported to the Emperor that "the attempts of bringing ammunition ordered in Germany through Roumania have all failed." He was therefore forced to endure his precarious situation month after month. It must, how-

Photo : Pollock.

THE "REST CAMP," HELLES, 1915.

This photograph, probably the only one of its kind, shows the degree of comfort to be expected by troops sent back from the trenches to rest. The rest-camp area consisted of long lines of grave-like excavations, each large enough to give cover to one man when lying down. The lines of "graves" were sited parallel to the Turkish lines on Achi Baba, and when shells from that quarter came over—a frequent occurrence—men were seen diving into their holes like so many rabbits. Nevertheless this system of protection was a good one and saved many lives. The situation of this camp was to the left of and just outside the picture shown on the page opposite.

ever, be observed that whereas the Turkish shortage of ammunition arose from causes beyond their control, the British shortage sprang solely from lack of decision in the distribution of the available quantities between the various theatres of war.

* * * *

Measures against the U-Boat Attack.

The measures taken to cope with the German submarine attack upon our communications proved, broadly speaking, completely successful. The Fleet was kept in the shelter of Mudros harbour; battleships were only exposed when required for some definite operation, and the ordinary support of the army by fire from the sea was afforded during June by destroyers and light vessels.

This was found to be sufficient. The observation and direction of the ships' fire attained every week a higher efficiency. This process continued steadily until naval co-operation in land

From a drawing by Lascelles.

ACHI BABA.

The country at Cape Helles between the beaches and the celebrated hill, Achi Baba, was gently undulating. The southern portion was somewhat spoon-shaped and in the hollow of the spoon were the rest camps. To the north of the rest area there was a gentle rise to the slopes of Achi Baba itself. Unfortunately for the British and French forces nearly the whole of the area which they occupied could be observed from Achi Baba. In consequence of this, troops resting could be harassed at will by gunfire from the Turkish position on Achi Baba or by enfilade from the vicinity of Kum Kale on the Asiatic shore.

Photo : Imperial War Museum.

LIEUT.-COMMANDER HOLBROOK AND THE CREW OF B 11.

Lieut.-Commander Holbrook had the distinction of receiving the first V.C. awarded to the Navy during the Great War. He is seen here third from the left in the top row, shortly after returning from his exploit at the Dardanelles, in the course of which he dived his submarine, the B 11, beneath five rows of mines and torpedoed the Turkish battleship *Messudieh*, returning safely to his base.

fighting on Gallipoli had become a factor of the utmost value. In July the monitors and "bulged" cruisers began to arrive. Thenceforward the fire of the Turkish guns from Asia was controlled and largely quelled. The four large monitors armed with 14-inch guns, four medium monitors armed with 9·2 or 6-inch guns, and four "bulged" cruisers (*Theseus, Endymion, Grafton* and *Edgar*) were all on the scene by the end of that month. Had action been taken when it was first proposed to Lord Fisher, the arrival of these vessels would have been antedated by more than three weeks. But the interval was passed without serious disadvantage to the army: and when the whole Monitor Fleet had arrived, the naval support of the troops was not only fully restored, but much enhanced.

Meanwhile the supply of the army was maintained by the use of large numbers of small shallow-draught vessels and proceeded uninterruptedly, so that by the middle of July reserves of twenty-four days' rations had been accumulated for all troops ashore at Helles and Anzac. The reinforcements sent from home were conveyed to their destination, although several transports were torpedoed, and in one case a thousand lives were lost. It is remarkable that neither monitors, "bulged" cruisers, nor shallow-draught vessels were ever seriously attacked or threatened by submarines. Lastly, the great netted areas proved an effective deterrent against submarine attack. Although warships of every kind were continually moving about within them, they were in no case molested during the whole of the campaign. Thus, what had seemed to be a danger potentially mortal was entirely warded

off by suitable measures perseveringly applied on a sufficient scale.

British Submarines in the Marmora.

While the submarine attack upon the British sea communications was being frustrated, a far more effective pressure was being brought to bear upon the enemy. In December, 1914, Lieutenant-Commander Norman Holbrook had gained the Victoria Cross by diving his submarine B 11 under the minefields of the Dardanelles and sinking the Turkish cruiser *Messudieh*. On April 17 this desperate enterprise had been again attempted by submarine E 15 in conjunction with Sir Ian Hamilton's impending landing. The effort failed. The vessel ran aground in the Straits near Dardanos; her Captain, Lieutenant-Commander T. S. Brodie, was killed; most of her crew were captured and her carcass, after being fiercely contended for, was finally shattered by a torpedo from a British picket boat.

On April 25, while the landing was in progress, the Australian submarine AE 2, undeterred by the fate of her forerunner, most gallantly and skilfully dived through and under the minefields and succeeded in entering the Sea of Marmora. Here from the 25th to the 30th she attacked the Turkish shipping and sank a large gunboat. On April 30, however, being damaged and unable to dive properly, she was herself sunk, after a two hours' fight, by a Turkish torpedo boat. But the way had been re-opened. The passage, whatever its perils, was shown to be still not impossible.

Exploits and Adventures.

The losses of these two boats, which so greatly disturbed Lord Fisher, did not prevent a sublime perseverance. On April 27, E 14 under Lieutenant-Commander C. Boyle, dived at 95 feet through the minefield, passed Kilid Bahr at 22 feet under the fire of all the forts and torpedoed a Turkish gunboat near Gallipoli. From this time forward, till the end, one or more British submarines continuously operated in the Sea of Marmora, and their attacks upon the Turkish water communications, almost by themselves achieved the ruin of the enemy.

E 14 remained in the Sea of Marmora from April 27 to

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

LIEUT.-COMMANDER C. BOYLE, V.C.

Another naval officer who greatly distinguished himself. Lieut.-Commander Boyle navigated his submarine, E 14, under the minefield in the Dardanelles, diving to a depth of 95 feet. In spite of heavy fire from the Turkish forts this officer succeeded in torpedoing a Turkish gunboat near Gallipoli. In addition to this, the E 14 remained in the Sea of Marmora for nearly three weeks, during which, as described in the text, she inflicted heavy losses upon the Turks.

May 18, continually hunted by torpedo boats and other patrol craft, and fired on so constantly that she could scarcely find breathing space to recharge her batteries and keep herself alive. Nevertheless she wrought decisive havoc on the Turkish transports. On the 29th she attacked two and sank one. On May 1 she sank a gunboat. On May 5 she attacked another transport and drove others back to Constantinople. On the 10th she attacked two transports convoyed by two Turkish destroyers and fired at both. The second transport was a very large vessel, full of troops; a terrific explosion followed the impact of the torpedo, and the transport sank rapidly. An entire infantry brigade and several batteries of artillery, in all upwards of 6,000 Turkish soldiers, were drowned. This awful event practically arrested the movement of Turkish troops by sea. E 14 had now no torpedoes, and on May 17 she received wireless orders to return. On the 18th she again ran the gauntlet of the forts at 22 feet, and dived, as she thought, under the minefields. She must, however, have passed right through the lines of mines in extreme danger.

Nasmith and Boyle.

Commander Nasmith in E 11 entered the Marmora on the following day. His vessel was newly equipped with a 6-pounder gun, and cruised for some days lashed alongside a sailing vessel, sinking a gunboat and several ships. On May 25 Commander Nasmith dived E 11 literally into Constantinople, and hit with a torpedo a large vessel alongside the arsenal. E 11 grounded several times and escaped with great difficulty from the enemy's harbour. She now established a reign of terror in the Marmora, attacking unsuccessfully the battleship *Barbarossa,* fighting with destroyers, sinking store-ships and steamers, with continued hair-breadth escapes from destruction. On June 7 she returned through the minefield, actually fouling a mine which she carried on her port hydroplane for a considerable distance while under heavy fire from the forts. She had been in the Marmora for nineteen days, and had sunk 1 gunboat, 3 transports, 1 ammunition ship and 3 store-ships.

On June 10 Commander Boyle made his second entry into the Marmora where he remained for twenty-three days, sinking 1 large steamer and 13 sailing vessels. E 12 (Lieutenant-Commander Bruce) and E 7 (Lieutenant-Commander Cochrane) passed the Straits on June 20 and 30 respectively, destroyed between them 7 steamers and 19 sailing vessels, and fired repeatedly on the roads and railways along the coast.

The Nagara Anti-Submarine Net.

A new peril was now to be added to the passage. In the middle of July the Turks completed the Nagara anti-submarine net. This net was made in 10-foot meshes of 3-inch, strengthened with 5-inch wire, and except for a small gateway, completely closed the passage to a depth of over 220 feet. This barrier was guarded by five motor-gunboats armed with depth charges, and by numerous guns specially placed.

On July 21 Commander Boyle, for the third time, made the passage of the Straits in E 14. A mine scraped past her near the Narrows without exploding, and by good luck she passed through the gate of the net at Nagara. On July 22 she met E 7 in the Marmora, and both vessels together continued their depredations upon shipping. All hospital ships were spared, although their increase in numbers showed that they were being used for military transport. Commander Boyle's final return on August 12, i.e. his sixth passage of the minefield, was thus described by him :—

"I missed the gate and hit the net. It is possible the net now extends nearly the whole way across. I was brought up from 80 feet to 45 feet in three seconds, but luckily only thrown 15 degrees off my course. There was a tremendous noise, scraping, banging, tearing and rumbling, and it sounded as if there were two distinct obstructions, as the noise nearly ceased and

Photo: Central News.

RETURN OF THE E 11.

Yet another submarine to distinguish itself at the Dardanelles was the E 11. Commanded by Lieut.-Commander Nasmith, this boat entered the Sea of Marmora on the day following the return of the E 14. She stayed there for nineteen days, and on one occasion actually entered Constantinople harbour, where she torpedoed the Turkish transport *Stamboul*. In all, the E 11, during her stay in the Marmora, sent to the bottom some eight enemy vessels. She is shown here being cheered by the crew of H.M.S. *Grampus* on her return.

then came on again, and we were appreciably checked twice. It took about 20 seconds to get through. I was fired at on rounding Kilid Bahr, and a torpedo was fired at me from Chanak, breaking surface a few yards astern of me. A mile south-west of Chanak I scraped past a mine, but it did not check me—after I got out I found some twin electric wire round my propellers . . . and various parts of the boat were scraped and scored by wire."

On August 5, E 11 (Commander Nasmith) had made her second passage of the Straits. A mine bumped heavily along her side off Kephez point at a depth of 70 feet. To break the net at Nagara she dived to 110 feet and then charged. The net caught her bow and she was drawn violently upwards. Under the strain the wires of the net snapped with a crack, and the submarine was freed. An hour later she torpedoed a transport; all day she was harassed by patrol craft; at dawn the next morning she was attacked by the bombs of an aeroplane. Later in the day she torpedoed a gunboat. On the 7th she was in action with troops on the roads along the coast. On the 8th she torpedoed and sank the battleship *Barbarossa*, which, escorted by two destroyers, was hurrying to the Peninsula during the Battle of Suvla Bay.

These adventures and exploits continued without cessation during twenty-nine days, at the end of which E 11 returned safely, having sunk or destroyed 1 battleship, 1 gunboat, 6 transports, 1 steamer and 23 sailing vessels.

Twenty-Seven Epic Voyages.

The perilous duty was taken up successively by E 2, E 7, E 12, H 1 (Lieutenant Pirie) and E 20 (Lieutenant-Commander Clyfford Warren), as well as by the French submarine *Turquoise*. In all, the passage of

Photo: E.N.A.

THE DISABLED E 15.

The feats of the British submarines in the Dardanelles were not, however, accomplished without loss. The E 15, which, on April 17, 1915, attempted the passage of the Narrows, ran aground near Dardanos. Her captain, Lieut.-Commander Brodie, was killed, and most of her crew captured. Her Turkish captors are seen taking over the disabled boat. They were not long to remain in possession of their prize, as she was finally shattered by a torpedo from a British picket boat.

Nagara was made twenty-seven times. Every one of these voyages is an epic in itself. Out of thirteen British and French submarines which made or attempted the passage into the Marmora, eight perished—four with all or nearly all hands. Besides E 15 and AE 11, Cochrane's E 7 was caught in the Nagara net on September 4. Bombed with depth charges for 16 hours, and having tried to fall through the bottom of the net by sinking to the excessive depth of 40 fathoms, Cochrane at last rose to the surface and finding himself inextricably enmeshed, ordered his crew to jump overboard, and sank his vessel with his own hands. His subsequent escapes from the Turks and adventures in captivity are an amazing tale of courage and pertinacity.

Of the French submarines three were destroyed or captured at the entrance or in the net: *Saphir* in January; *Joule* in May; and *Mariotte* on July 26. The *Turquoise* was the only French submarine which achieved the passage, and she was disabled and captured after a brief career in the Marmora on October 30. In the captain's cabin of the *Turquoise* the enemy found his notebook, which he had forgotten to destroy. This notebook contained the rendezvous at which the *Turquoise* was to meet the British submarine E 20 on November 6. The German submarine U 14 was repairing at Constantinople. *She* kept the rendezvous, and E 20, expecting a friend, was blown to pieces by the torpedo of a foe.[1]

The Turkish Sea Communication Cut.

In all, the British submarines destroyed in the Marmora 1 battleship, 1 destroyer, 5 gunboats, 11 transports,

[1] *U-boote gegen U-boote,* by Lieutenant zur See von Heimburg (*Die Woche,* March 10, 1917).

44 steamers and 148 sailing vessels. The effect of the virtual stoppage of the Turkish sea communication was most serious to the enemy; and towards the end of June the Turkish Army was reduced to the narrowest margin of food and ammunition. It was only by great exertions and in the nick of time that the land route was organized sufficiently to bear the strain. Henceforward the whole supply of the Peninsula was dependent upon 100 miles of bullock transport over a single road, itself vulnerable from the sea.

The Naval History of Britain contains no page more wonderful than that which records the prowess of her submarines at the Dardanelles. Their exploits constitute in daring, in skill, in endurance, in risk, the finest examples of submarine action in the whole of the Great War, and were, moreover, marked by a strict observance of the recognized rules of warfare. When one thinks of these officers and men, penned together amid the intricate machinery which crammed their steel, cigar-shaped vessels; groping, butting, charging far below the surface at unmeasured, unknown obstructions; surrounded by explosive engines, any one of which might destroy them at a touch; the target of guns and torpedoes if they rose for an instant to the light of day; harried by depth charges, hunted by gunboats and destroyers, stalked by the German U-boat; expecting every moment to be shattered, stifled, or hopelessly starved at the bottom of the sea; and yet in spite of all, enduring cheerfully such ordeals for weeks at a time; returning unflinchingly again and again through the Jaws of Death—it is bitter indeed to remember that their prowess and devotion were uncrowned by victory.

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The Actual Facts.

At the end of the first week in July, Lord Kitchener resolved to add the 53rd and 54th Territorial Divisions to the reinforcements that were going to the Dardanelles.

There is no principle of war better established than that everything should be massed for the battle. The lessons of military history, the practice of great commanders, the doctrines of the text-books, have in every age enjoined this rule. We see Napoleon before his battles grasping for every man he can

Photo: E.N.A.

THE CAPTURED CREW OF THE E 15.

After the loss of their vessel the survivors among the crew of the E 15 were removed to Constantinople as prisoners of war. This photograph was taken shortly after their capture.

reach, neglecting no resource however small, cheerfully accepting risks at other points, content with nothing less than the absolute maximum which human power can command.

This high prudence cannot be discerned in Lord Kitchener's preparations at this time. He did not decide to add the 53rd and 54th Divisions to the reinforcements that were going to the Dardanelles until it was impossible for the second of them to arrive before the battle had begun, thus having to go direct into action from a three weeks' voyage. The position of the troops in Egypt continued until the last moment undetermined. Including the Dardanelles details nearly 75,000 men were accumulated in Alexandria, Cairo and along the Canal. As long as we were threatening Constantinople there could be no danger of a serious Turkish invasion of Egypt.

It should have been possible to organize from General Maxwell's troops at least 30,000 additional rifles as a reserve which could be thrown into the Gallipoli operations at the decisive moment and for a limited period. If General Maxwell had been ordered to organize such a force, and if Sir Ian Hamilton had been told that he could count it among the troops available for the battle, it would have been woven into the plans which were being prepared and would have sensibly improved the prospects.

Lord Kitchener's treatment of the question was, however, most baffling. His telegraphic correspondence with Sir Ian Hamilton, which has been published, shows him at one moment counting large numbers of troops in Egypt as available if necessary for the Dardanelles, and at another chiding Sir Ian for attempting to draw on them. In consequence the British garrison of Egypt played no part in Sir Ian Hamilton's calculations and plans, and was only thrown in, like so much else, too late.

A Misleading Telegram.

When on the eve of the battle, July 29, Lord Kitchener telegraphed to Sir Ian Hamilton informing him that he had "a total of about 205,000 men for the forthcoming operation," the General replied: "The grand total you mention does not take into account non-effectives or casualties; it includes reinforcements such as the 54th and part of the 53rd Divisions, etc., which cannot be here in time for my operation, and it also includes Yeomanry and Indian troops which, until this morning, I was unaware were at my unreserved disposal. For the coming operation the number of rifles available is about half the figure you quote, viz. 120,000." This figure was not effectively disputed by the War Office.

I was not able to discover the shortage of drafts, nor was I aware of the ambiguous conditions under which the garrison of Egypt was available as a reserve. But a young Staff Officer from the Dardanelles, who reached London in July, disclosed to me the shortage of ammunition and suggested that consignments sent by rail to Marseilles instead of by sea might still reach the army in time for the battle. I therefore urged Lord Kitchener to send the whole of the latest weekly outputs by this route. Usually most kind and patient with my importunity, he took this request very much amiss. I declared I would demand a Cabinet decision, and we parted abruptly. I spent the afternoon and evening marshalling opinion, and informed the Prime Minister of my intention to raise the issue. However, when the decks were cleared for action and I was invited to state my case, Lord Kitchener ended the matter by stating that he had now found it possible to issue the necessary orders. Three train-loads of high explosive shell went accordingly.

Upon such preludes the event was now to supervene.

CHAPTER LI

THE BATTLE OF SUVLA BAY

The Threefold Plan—The Forces Available—The Helles Attack—Lone Pine—The Sortie from Anzac—The Landing at Suvla—First Twenty-Four Hours at Suvla—At Liman von Sanders's Headquarters—The Turkish Divisions from Bulair—An Anxious Interval—The Anzac Advance Resumed—The Struggle for the Crest Line—Colonel Allanson's Account—A Fatal Mischance—Sir Frederick Stopford at Suvla Bay—The Second Twenty-Four Hours—Colonel Aspinall's Account—Arrival of the Commander-in-Chief—His Personal Intervention—Attacks on the 9th and 10th at Suvla—Mustapha Kemal's Counterstroke at Anzac—Actions of the 15th and 21st—The True Cause of Failure—Mistakes of Downing Street and Whitehall.

THE long and varied annals of the British Army contain no more heart-breaking episode than the Battle of Suvla Bay. The greatness of the prize in view, the narrowness by which it was missed, the extremes of valiant skill and of incompetence, of effort and inertia, which were equally presented, the malevolent fortune which played about the field, are features not easily to be matched in our history. The tale has been often told, and no more than a general survey can here be attempted.[1]

The Threefold Plan.

Sir Ian Hamilton's plan had for its supreme object the capture of Hill 971 (Koja Chemen Tepe), the dominating point of the Sari Bair Ridge, and working from there, to grip the neck of the Peninsula from Gaba Tepe to Maidos. This conception was elaborated as follows:—

(1) To break out with a rush from Anzac and cut off the bulk of the Turkish Army from land communication with Constantinople.

(2) To gain artillery positions which would cut off the bulk of the Turkish Army from sea traffic whether with Constantinople or with Asia.

(3) To secure Suvla Bay as a winter base for Anzac and all the troops operating in that neighbourhood.

For this purpose three separate attacks were prepared in extreme detail by the Army Staff during the month of July: first, a holding attack by two of the six divisions at Helles to prevent the Turks from removing any troops from this sector of the front; secondly, a great attack from Anzac on the main and dominating ridge of Sari Bair by the two Australasian divisions, reinforced by the 13th New Army Division and one British and one Indian brigade; and thirdly, a landing by two divisions (the 10th and 11th) forming the IXth Corps at Suvla Bay to secure the Anafarta Ridge and join their right hands to the Anzac attack and help it as it progressed.

The Forces Available.

The Helles sector was held by 35,000 men under General Davies. To the Anzac attack were assigned 37,000 under General Birdwood; and to the Suvla attack, 25,000 under General Stopford; the whole aggregating, with a reserve on the islands or approaching on the sea of 20,000 to 25,000, about 120,000 fighting men.

The Turks believed that the British had received reinforcements amounting perhaps to 100,000 men, and they expected a general attack, together with a landing, early in August. They realized that the Sari Bair Ridge was the key to the Narrows; they were apprehensive of landings near Kum Tepe or near Bulair, and in addition they had to guard the Asiatic shore. They knew that Suvla and Ejelmer Bays were

[1] See map on p. 723.

possible landing-places, but they did not regard landings there as sufficiently probable to warrant further dissipation of their strength. On the evening of August 6 their dispositions were as follows: at Helles, 40,000 rifles with 94 guns; opposite Anzac and between Anzac and Helles, 30,000 rifles, supported by 76 guns; at Bulair, 20,000 rifles and 80 guns; on the Asiatic coast, 20,000 rifles with about 60 guns.

In all, including detachments of troops guarding the coast at various points, the Turks had been able to marshal 20 divisions, comprising about 120,000 rifles with 330 guns, and of these 90,000 to 100,000 men and 270 guns were actually on the Gallipoli Peninsula.

The forces on both sides available for the battle are thus seen to be approximately equal. The British did not possess any of the preponderance necessary for an offensive. Once their attack was fully disclosed and battle was joined along the whole front, there was no reasonable expectation of their being able to defeat the Turkish Army. There was, however, a chance of seizing vital positions by surprise before the Turks could bring up all their forces. The situation, in fact, exactly reproduces that of April 25, but on a larger scale. Once again the advantages of sea power have been neutralized by delay and the enemy given time to gather forces equal to our own; once again a frightful and dubious ordeal has taken the place of a sound and reasonably sure operation; once again the only hope lies in the devotion of the troops and the skill of their leaders; once again all is at the mercy of time and chance.

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The Helles Attack.

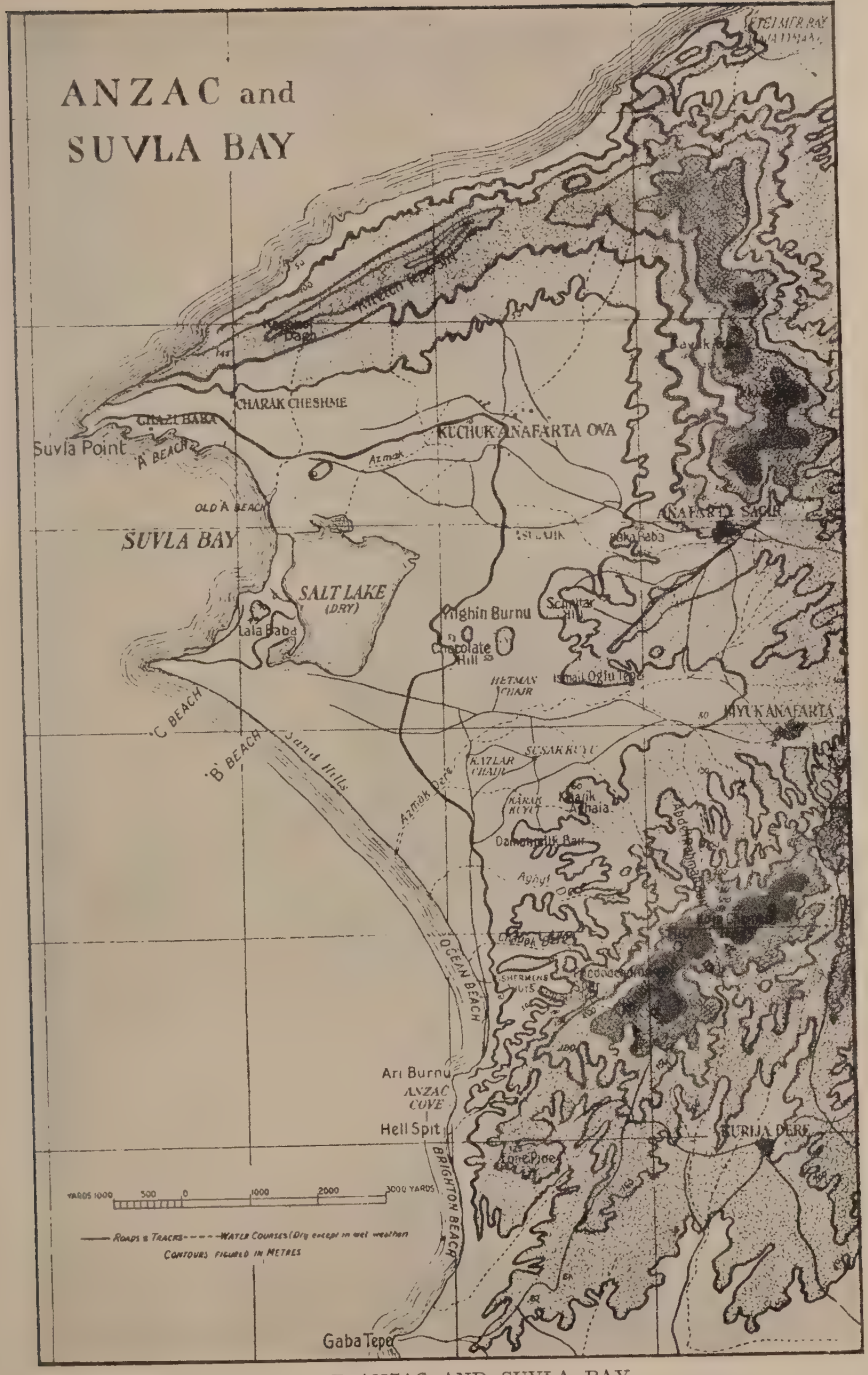
On the afternoon of August 6 the great battle began with the attack of the Lancashire and Lowland Territorial Divisions on about 1,200 yards of the Turkish line at Helles. As it chanced, the Turks had just brought up two fresh divisions to this front. They were found in great strength, and their trench systems swarmed with men. Fierce fighting began at once and was maintained with increasing severity for a whole week. The conflict centred round a vineyard which was stormed at the outset by the British and held by them against repeated counter-attacks until the 12th, when it was recaptured by the enemy, who the next day were driven out by the British, with whom in the end it remained.

It was not the only prize which had been purchased by costly valour. Of the seven Turkish divisions concentrated at the southern end of the Peninsula only one could be withdrawn to play its part in the real crisis of the battle.

Lone Pine.

Simultaneously with the British attack at Helles there began on the evening of the 6th an Australian attack on the Lone Pine Ridge to the right of the Anzac position. This attack was itself a subsidiary preliminary to the main Anzac operation. Its object was to deceive the enemy and draw him to the Anzac right, while all the time the decisive manœuvre was to proceed out on the Anzac left. Lone Pine Ridge and the fortifications surmounting it were stormed by the 1st Australian Brigade before sundown. The great beams which covered the Turkish trenches, converting them in the absence of adequate howitzer attack, into completely protected galleries, were torn asunder by main force. The Australians plunged through the apertures and slew or captured the defenders of the galleries.

The Turks immediately counter-attacked with the utmost fury and in large numbers. Intense and bloody fighting continued at this point throughout the night. It was renewed on the 7th and again on a great scale on the 9th, but every hostile effort to retake Lone Pine failed, and it rested to the end in the strong hands of the 1st Australian Brigade. Other attacks akin and supplemental to the assault of Lone Pine were delivered by the Australians against various fortified points in the centre of their line, particularly upon a redoubt called the Chessboard. In spite of every sacrifice no ground



MAP OF ANZAC AND SUVLA BAY.

A contoured map showing the nature of the country at Anzac Cove and Suvla Bay.

was gained, and the attacking parties were in some cases almost completely destroyed.

The Sortie from Anzac.

While the roar of the cannonade at Helles and at Lone Pine resounded through the Peninsula, the great sortie from Anzac had begun. Each night for a week beforehand powerful reinforcements of troops had secretly and skilfully been crowded into Anzac Cove and lay concealed in gulleys and dug-outs, until on August 6 General Birdwood's force comprised 37,000 men and 72 guns. Now in the darkness of a moonless night 16,000 men in two main columns crept out from the left of the Anzac position, toiled silently a mile along the beach, then wheeled to their right and proceeded to attack by three rugged, scrub-entangled, water-formed ravines which led up to the fateful summits of Sari Bair. The opening phase of this extraordinary enterprise involved the seizure of the fortified under-features to the left and right of the three ravines. The forces to whom these tasks had been assigned gained punctually and successfully both these

Photo: Captain C. Jackson, A.F.C., late A.I.F., and R.A.F.

BEFORE THE ATTACK AT LONE PINE.

The successful attack upon the Lone Pine ridge was entrusted to the 1st Australian Brigade, and was carried out on the evening of August 6, 1915. The position was stormed before sundown and was never retaken, in spite of heavy counter attacks. The photograph shows a company of the assaulting troops receiving final instructions before moving off.

Photo: Captain C. Jackson, A.F.C., late A.I.F., and R.A.F.

AFTER THE ATTACK AT LONE PINE.

This photograph, taken in one of the captured Turkish trenches on Lone Pine shortly after the attack, supplies proof, if such were required, of the severe nature of the struggle at this point. Here, as elsewhere, the Australians proved themselves gallant men and dauntless fighters.

strong points, and the main columns continued through the night to battle their way upward against darkness, boulders, scrub and the enemy's outposts.

The hope of General Birdwood, of Sir Ian Hamilton, and of the staffs had been that dawn would see the heads of the Australian and British columns in possession of the decisive summits of Chunuk Bair and Koja Chemen Tepe. It would not have taken in daylight more than two hours to cover the distance unopposed. Six hours had been allowed under the actual conditions. But when dawn broke, the difficulties of the night and of the ground, and the stubborn and disconcerting resistance of the Turkish skirmishers, had prevented more than half the distance being covered. The troops were exhausted, and, after some vain efforts, it was determined to consolidate the position gained, to rest and reorganize the troops, and to renew the attack during the night of the 7th-8th.

Here was the cardinal fatality. Had it been possible to have leap-frogged the exhausted troops by a wave of fresh reinforcements, the whole crest of Sari Bair might well have fallen before noon into our possession. It had not been found possible to organize this in the face of the difficulties of the ground and of supplies, and meanwhile the direction and scale of the attack were now fully disclosed to the enemy.

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The Landing at Suvla.

It is at this point that we must move on to Suvla Bay. A number of the steel-plated motor-lighters which Lord Fisher had designed at the end of 1914 for the landing of troops upon hostile beaches had now been completed and sent to the Dardanelles. They were

designed to carry five hundred infantry at a time at a speed of five knots, were bullet-proof and fitted with landing-bridges at their bows. Their appearance gained them throughout the Ægean the nickname of "Beetles."

In thirteen of these Beetles, with numerous destroyers, lighters and transports, covered by a strong squadron of the Fleet, the 11th Division, followed by the 10th, had been moving through the blackest night towards Suvla Bay. Two hours before midnight the three brigades of the 11th Division reached the shore, the 34th Brigade landing at "A" Beach inside Suvla Bay, the 32nd and 33rd Brigades at "B" and "C" Beaches south of Nibrunesi Point.

In spite of the rifle fire of the Turkish outposts guarding the coast, of the grounding of some of the Beetles before they reached the shore, and the disconcerting effect from land mines which exploded near Beach "A," the whole three brigades disembarked successfully without much loss in two or three hours. Their immediate duty was to occupy the two small eminences, Hill 10 and Lala Baba, on each side of the dried-up Salt Lake, and to take possession of the high ground to the northwards towards Kiretch Tepe Sirt. Thereafter as a second step a combined attack was to be made by the troops at Hill 10 and Lala Baba upon Chocolate Hill. If this was successful, the advance was to be continued against the rugged, scrub-covered and intricate under-feature known as Ismail Oglu Tepe. It was contemplated by the Staff that unless strong forces of the enemy were encountered, all these positions might well be in the hands of the troops by dawn. The event, however, turned very differently.[1]

First Twenty-Four Hours at Suvla.

It was 2 a.m. before the half battalion of Turks holding Lala Baba had been driven off and the hill occupied. Meanwhile the Brigadier commanding the 34th Brigade, having landed at Beach "A," perceived a sand-hill near the shore which he took to be Hill 10, and was content to occupy this until dawn. It was broad daylight before Hill 10 was taken and its surviving defenders retired slowly into the scrub of the plain. Thus the morning of the 7th saw only the first part of the task of the 11th Division accomplished, and as the light grew stronger Turkish artillery from unseen positions in the hills began fitfully to shell the various Beaches and the landed troops. Darkness exercises so baffling and mysterious an effect upon the movements even of the most experienced troops that the time-table of the Staff may well be deemed too ambitious. But the performance fell far short of reasonable expectation. The British Intelligence believed that five Turkish battalions, aggregating 4,000 men with artillery, were guarding this part of the coast. In fact, however, only three battalions, two of which were gendarmerie, aggregating about 1,800 men and 20 guns, stood in the path of the 11th Division.

The 10th Division, under General Hill, now approached the shore near Lala Baba and began to disembark from dawn onwards under an occasional shell-fire. By 8 a.m. thirteen battalions of the 11th Division, two mountain batteries and the covering ships were all in action, and the 10th Division was rapidly growing behind them. This force, rising as the day passed to 20,000 men, had only to advance three miles from their landing-places to brush before them what was left of the 1,800 Turks and occupy positions where water was plentiful and which were of decisive importance in this part of the field. Instead of doing this all the troops that had landed either remained idle near Lala Baba for many hours or toiled along the sandy shore around the Salt Lake, a march of five miles in the heat of the day, before attacking Chocolate Hill. Thirst and exhaustion afflicted these young soldiers, and the evening was far advanced before by a spirited attack they made themselves masters of Chocolate Hill.

Night closed with the troops much wearied, with their units intermingled, their water supply in confusion, and with only their earliest objectives ob-

[1] All these positions can be followed on the map on page 723.

tained. About a thousand casualities had been sustained, and these were almost entirely confined to three or four battalions. Thus passed the first twenty-four hours at Suvla Bay.

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At Liman von Sanders's Headquarters.

On the evening of August 6 the field telephones had carried the news of the beginning of the battle to General Liman von Sanders in his headquarters at Gallipoli, almost as soon as he heard the opening of the cannonade. Heavy British and Australian attacks were beginning at Helles and at Lone Pine, while at the same time British feints in the Gulf of Xeros and opposite Mitylene were reported as actual or prospective landings.

Precious as were the moments, it was impossible to take any measures before the intention of the assailants was fully disclosed. But before midnight news was received that large masses of troops were moving out from the left of the Anzac position along the coast northwards, and later, that numerous disembarkations were taking place at Suvla Bay. Two divisions in reserve at Maidos were ordered to reinforce the defenders of Sari Bair. These could certainly come into action during the next day.

Suvla Bay, however, was an inevitable surprise against which it would not have been reasonable to prepare on a great scale beforehand. Who could measure the strength of the attack? A division, two divisions, an entire corps, two corps —no one could tell. But whatever might be the strength of the invaders there stood between them and the vital positions of Kiretch Tepe Sirt, the Anafarta Ridge and Ismail Oglu Tepe, only the German Major Willmer with one battalion of Gallipoli gendarmes, one of Brussa gendarmes and one of the 31st regiment with 20 guns. No help could come from the south; all was becoming locked in general battle there.

The Turkish Divisions from Bulair.

Liman von Sanders, repeating his procedure of April 26, ordered the 7th and 12th Divisions to march at once from Bulair to Suvla Bay, and all the troops on the Asiatic side to cross to Gallipoli. Once again, Asia and the vital Bulair lines must be left virtually unguarded, the easy spoil of any new disembarkation. "For the second time," says the German Commander, "the upper part of the Gulf of Xeros was completely denuded of troops and on the entire Asiatic side only three battalions and a few batteries had been left behind for coast defence." The 7th Turkish Division received orders to march at 3.40 a.m. and the 12th at 8.30 a.m. on August 7. Both divisions started from the neighbourhood of Bulair by the two roads running southward along the Peninsula. *The distance between them and Suvla Bay was more than thirty miles.*

It seemed to General von Sanders that no effective help could reach Major Willmer and his gendarmerie before the night of the 8th, and that no serious counter-attacks could be launched before the morning of the 9th. Daylight of the 7th revealed the extent of the British landings. The great Armada filled the Bay, its guns searched the hills, and swarms of troops were landing in successive waves upon the beach and gathering in the plain. Far away to the north the 7th and 12th Turkish Divisions, forming the XVIth Turkish Army Corps, had only just begun their march. However, during the afternoon Fezi Bey, the Turkish General commanding the Corps, reported, to Sanders's extreme surprise, that his two divisions had reached their destinations east of Anafarta, having covered a double march in the day. On this Sanders ordered a general attack at dawn on the 8th into the Anafarta Plain.

Before daybreak on the 8th he mounted his horse and rode to the deployment area of this attack. He wandered about for some time looking vainly for his troops. He found at length a Staff Officer of the 7th Turkish Division, who reported that he was looking for an outpost position, that a large part of the 7th and 12th Divisions were still far behind, and that an attack

that morning was out of the question. The Commander-in-Chief therefore ordered the attack to begin at sunset.

An Anxious Interval.

He passed the day of the 8th in great anxiety, having still nothing between him and the immense forces of the invader but the exhausted and much reduced gendarmerie. Four hundred men, the remains of the Brussa gendarmes and of the 2nd/31st battalion, were at Ismail Oglu Tepe. Three hundred men, the remains of the Gallipoli gendarmes, were on Kiretch Tepe Sirt. There were no troops between these two points. Kavak and Tekke hills and all the low intervening ground was absolutely unoccupied. In these circumstances all the Turkish guns, except one, were withdrawn behind the Anafarta Ridge to avoid what seemed to be their otherwise inevitable capture.

Photo: Captain C. Jackson, A.F.C., late A.I.F., and R.A.F.

NEWS FROM THE OUTSIDE WORLD.

Owing to the nature of the Gallipoli front, a few square miles of land cut off on every side by the sea, officers and men alike were completely out of touch with daily events taking place elsewhere. To remedy this situation Army Headquarters printed a modest little bulletin for issue to the troops. Referred to at times by irreverent people as "The Gallipoli Liar," the bulletin's news items were inclined to err on the optimistic side; but its arrival was invariably welcomed and gave the men something to talk about.

Towards evening General von Sanders learned from Major Willmer that the XVIth Turkish Corps had not yet arrived at its area of deployment. He summoned its commander to his presence and learned from him that the exhausted condition of the troops did not permit of any attack before the morning of the 9th. In his indignation at having been mocked by false hopes, he dismissed the General of the XVIth Corps and confided the vital fortunes of the whole of the Ottoman Empire to an officer of whom we have heard before—and since. "That same evening," he writes, "I transferred the command of all the troops in the Anafarta sector to Mustapha Kemal Bey, formerly commanding the 19th Division."

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The Anzac Advance Resumed.

We must now return to the Anzacs and Sari Bair. The whole of the 7th was spent by General Birdwood's troops in reorganizing, resting and preparing for renewed battle at dawn. The line of Ghurkas, British and Anzacs lay across the mountain slopes, having gained about two-thirds of the distance to their summits. But those summits were now guarded by three times the defenders of the night before.

The advance from Anzac was resumed before dawn on the 8th. The right and centre columns, starting from Rhododendron Spur, assaulted Chunuk Bair. The left column starting

from the head of the most northerly of the three ravines attacked Hill Q, a knoll upon the main ridge separated by a dip from Koja Chemen Tepe. This was a restriction of the original front of attack. An intense struggle now began and raged for three days without cessation. The right column of New Zealand troops soon after daybreak seized, conquered and held a substantial position on the south-western end of Chunuk Bair, and thus established themselves on the main ridge. The centre and left columns, unsupported by any help from Suvla Bay, were unable to make much progress. Night quenched for a while the bloody conflict. Meanwhile fresh Turkish troops continually reached the defence, and owing to the difficulties of water and ground no reinforcements could be employed in the attack.

Photo: Central Press.

MUSTAPHA KEMAL.

Born at Salonica in 1880 this remarkable man was, in 1915, in command of the 19th Turkish Division on Gallipoli. The text describes how the hand of fate directed that at the time of the Anzac landing Kemal should be exercising his best regiment on Sari Bair. On that day, and later at Suvla, when General von Sanders entrusted to him the command of all the troops in the Anafarta sector, Kemal Pasha deserved well of his country. The story of Mustapha is not yet complete. As the regenerator of Turkey in the post-war years much has been heard of him. From being a divisional commander in 1915 Kemal has become a figure of international importance.

The Struggle for the Crest Line.

The battle was renewed with undiminished fury on the 9th. The Anzac right maintained itself on Chunuk Bair; its left attacked Hill Q; its centre sought to join these two positions by occupying the saddle between them. These operations were preceded and sustained by an intense bombardment of every available gun of the Fleet and Army. The left attack, delayed by the darkness and the ground, was late in coming into action and failed to take Hill Q. But in spite of this the 6th Ghurkas and two companies of the 6th South Lancashires, belonging to the centre, striving upwards, gained command of vital positions on the saddle between Chunuk Bair and Hill Q.

Colonel Allanson's Account.

The heroic officer, Colonel Cecil Allanson, in command of the 6th Ghurkas, who led the assault, has

recorded his experiences in the tragedy which followed.[1] He passed the night of the 8th-9th in the firing line.

"At an angle of about 35 degrees and about a hundred yards away were the Turks. . . . During the night a message came to me from the General Officer Commanding to try and get up on to 971 at 5.15 a.m., and that from 4.45 to 5.15 the Navy would bombard the top. I was to get all troops near me to co-operate. . . . As I could only get three companies of British troops, I had to be satisfied with this. . . . I had only 15 minutes left; the roar of the artillery preparation was enormous; the hill, which was almost perpendicular, seemed to leap underneath one. I recognized that if we flew up the hill the moment it stopped, we ought to get to the top. I put the three companies into the trenches among my men, and said that the moment they saw me go forward carrying a red flag, every one was to start. I had my watch out, 5.15.

"I never saw such artillery preparation; the trenches were being torn to pieces; the accuracy was marvellous, as we were only just below. At 5.18 it had not stopped, and I wondered if my watch was wrong. 5.20 silence; I waited three minutes to be certain, great as the risk was. Then off we dashed, all hand in hand, a most perfect advance and a wonderful sight. . . . At the top we met the Turks; Le Marchand was down, a bayonet through the heart. I got one through the leg, and then for about what appeared ten minutes, we fought hand to hand, we bit and fisted, and used rifles and pistols as clubs; and then the Turks turned and fled, and I felt a very proud man; the key of the whole Peninsula was ours, and our losses had not been so very great for such a result. Below I saw the Straits, motors and wheeled transport, on the roads leading to Achi Baba.

[1] Written forty-eight hours after the event.

Photo: Central News.

LIEUT.-GENERAL SIR FREDERICK STOPFORD.

Commander of the IXth Corps at Suvla Bay, General Stopford appears to have lacked the force and drive essential for the successful direction of so vital an operation. Had he, instead of resting content with the successful landing of his men, used the golden hours during which the Turkish reinforcements were still some distance away to seize the all important ridges, the story of Gallipoli might have had a different ending.

A Fatal Mischance.

"As I looked round I saw we were not being supported, and thought I could help best by going after those [Turks] who had retreated in front of us. We dashed down towards Maidos, but had only got about 100 feet down when suddenly our own Navy put six 12-in. monitor shells into us, and all was terrible confusion.[1] It was a deplorable disaster; we were obviously mistaken for Turks, and we

[1] The size of these shells and who fired them has never been established.

Photo: Central Press.

UNBROKEN HARMONY AT SUVLA: AUGUST 8, 1915.

While General Stopford, aboard the sloop *Jonquil*, was expressing to Colonel Aspinall, Sir Ian Hamilton's General Staff Officer for Operations, his unbounded satisfaction upon the successful landing; while behind Anafarta General Liman von Sanders awaited with impatience the arrival of his reinforcements from Bulair; eager and willing British troops in strength more than enough to have seized the ridges were suffered to remain, leaderless and idle, on the beaches.

had to get back. It was an appalling sight: the first hit a Ghurka in the face; the place was a mass of blood and limbs and screams, and we all flew back to the summit and to our old position just below.[1] I remained on the crest with about 15 men; it was a wonderful view; below were the Straits, reinforcements coming over from the Asia Minor side, motor-cars flying. We commanded Kilid Bahr, and the rear of Achi Baba and the communications to all their Army there. . . .

"I was now left alone much crippled by the pain of my wound, which was stiffening, and loss of blood. I saw the advance at Suvla Bay had failed, though I could not detect more than one or two thousand against them, but I saw large Turkish reinforcements being pushed in that direction. My telephone lines were smashed. . . . I now dropped down into the trenches of the night before, and after getting my wound bound up, proceeded to try and find where all the regiment was; I got them all back in due course, and awaited support before moving up the hill again. Alas! it was never to come, and we were told to hold our position throughout the night of the 9th-10th.

"During the afternoon we were counter-attacked by large bodies of Turks five times between 5 and 7 p.m., but they never got to within 15 yards of our line. . . . Captain Tomes and Le Marchand are buried on the highest summit of the Chunuk Bair. . . . I was ordered back to make a report. I was very weak and faint. . . . I reported to the General, and told him that unless strong reinforcements were pushed up, and food and water could be sent us, we must come back, but that if we did we gave up the key to the Gallipoli Peninsula. The General then told me that nearly everywhere else the attack had failed, and the regiment would be withdrawn to the lower hills early next morning."

The morning of the 10th dawned on these vain prodigies of devotion. Twelve thousand men, at least half of those actually involved in the severity of the fighting, had fallen, and the terrible summits flamed unconquered as ever. Nevertheless the Anzac right held with relieved troops their important gain on the Chunuk Bair, and against this the Turkish reserves were darkly gathering.

[1] 150 men are said to have been killed by these shells.

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Sir Frederick Stopford at Suvla Bay.

We have seen how General Liman von Sanders spent August 8, awaiting with impatience in the hills behind Anafarta the arrival of reinforcements from Bulair. What meanwhile was happening at Suvla Bay? Our military annals, old and new, are not so lacking in achievement that one need shrink from faithful record.

Lieutenant-General Sir Frederick Stopford, Commander of the IXth Corps, had arrived with his staff in the sloop *Jonquil* at daylight on the 7th. He had remained on the *Jonquil* on account of the facilities of wireless and signal communication. During the afternoon of the 8th he had paid a visit to the shore.

General Stopford was an agreeable and cultivated gentleman who fifteen years before had served in the South African War as Military Secretary to Sir Redvers Buller. After commanding the London District, he had left the Army in 1909, and had lived until the outbreak of the great struggle in a retirement unhappily marked by much ill-health. From this seclusion he had been drawn, like many others, by the enormous expansion of our land forces. He had been entrusted by Lord Kitchener with the task of training an Army Corps in England, and he now found himself for the first time in his life in a position of high and direct responsibility and in actual command of troops in the presence of the enemy. In these circumstances we are certainly entitled to assume that he did his best.

The Second Twenty-Four Hours.

The natural disquietudes with which he had contemplated the nocturnal

landing on a hostile shore were no sooner relieved by success, than another set of serious considerations presented themselves. The enemy might be more numerous than the Staff believed; they might have more trenches than the aeroplane reconnaissance had reported. Moreover, they might at any time resume the desultory shelling of the Beaches which had died away on the evening of the 7th.

In this situation the measures which he considered most necessary were the reorganization of the troops who had landed, the improvement of their supplies particularly in regard to water, the digging of trenches to secure the ground they had gained, and the landing of as much artillery as possible to support their further advance. In these occupations August 8, the second twenty-four hours since the landing, passed peacefully away, while the Chief-of-Staff, General Reed, who shared his Chief's outlook to the full, prepared the orders and arrangements for an advance at daybreak on the 9th. "The second day of the IXth Corps' stay at Suvla," writes General Callwell, at this time Director of Operations at the War Office, "was, from the fighting point of view, practically a day of rest."[1]

We may pause to survey the scene on both sides of the front this sunny August afternoon. On the one hand, the placid, prudent, elderly English gentleman with his 20,000 men spread around the Beaches, the front lines sitting on the tops of shallow trenches, smoking and cooking, with here and there an occasional rifle shot, others bathing by hundreds in the bright blue bay where, disturbed hardly by a single shell, floated the great ships of war: on the other, the skilful German stamping with impatience for the arrival of his divisions, expecting with every hour to see his scanty covering forces brushed aside, while the furious Kemal animated his fanatic soldiers and hurled them forward towards the battle.

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[1] *The Dardanelles Campaign*, p. 229.

Colonel Aspinall's Account.

Sir Ian Hamilton's General Staff Officer for Operations, Colonel Aspinall, had been ordered to report on the Suvla situation for the Commander-in-Chief. He arrived on the morning of the 8th. He has written a graphic account[1] of the peaceful scene that met his gaze. When his first incredulity had been confirmed by a tour of the shore, he proceeded on board the *Jonquil* where the Corps Commander still had his headquarters.

"General Stopford greeted me by 'Well, Aspinall, the men have done splendidly and have been magnificent.' 'But they haven't reached the hills, Sir,' I replied. 'No,' he answered, 'but they are ashore!' I replied that I was sure the Commander-in-Chief would be disappointed that they had not yet reached the high ground covering the Bay, in accordance with the orders, and I impressed upon him the urgent importance of moving forward at the earliest possible moment, before the enemy's reinforcements forestalled him on the hills. General Stopford replied that he quite realized the importance of losing no time, but that it was impossible to advance until the men had rested. He intended to make a fresh advance on the following day.

"I then went on board the Admiral's flagship and sent the following telegram to General Headquarters:—

"'Just been ashore where I found all quiet. No rifle fire, no artillery fire, and apparently no Turks. IX Corps resting. Feel confident that golden opportunities are being lost and look upon situation as serious.'

"Shortly after sending this message I heard that the Commander-in-Chief was already on his way to Suvla, and a few minutes later he came in to harbour on the Admiral's yacht."

* * * *

Arrival of the Commander-in-Chief.

The harmony of Suvla Bay was marred late in the afternoon by the

[1] Colonel Aspinall has placed this statement at my disposal.

arrival of the Commander-in-Chief.

Sir Ian Hamilton had been persuaded by his Staff that his proper place during this great triple battle was in his regular headquarters at Imbros. Here then he remained during the whole of the 7th and the morning of the 8th, digesting such information as the telegrams from the various sectors of the front contained. But at 11.30 on the morning of the 8th he became so disquieted with the want of news from Suvla that he could bear his isolation no longer, and determined to go there at once.

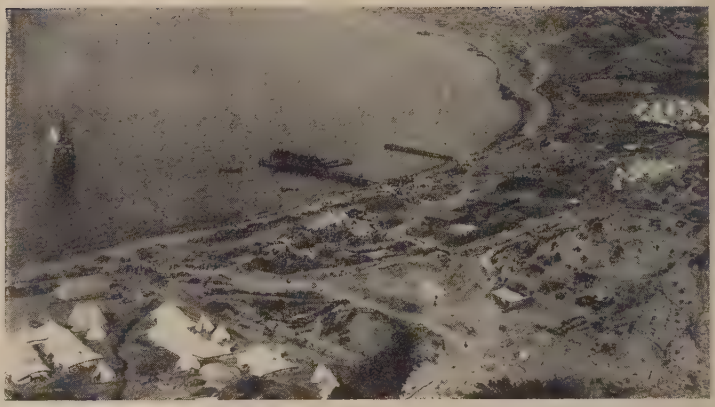

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

NORTH BEACH, ANZAC.

Ocean or North Beach, Anzac, is to the north of Anzac Cove. Still farther north is Suvla Bay.

A destroyer, the *Arno,* had been specially placed at his disposal by the Navy for the period of the operations, and to the *Arno* accordingly signals for instant departure were made. It then appeared that the local Rear-Admiral had for reasons connected with the condition of the boilers, ordered the fires to be drawn from this vessel, and that she could not move for six or seven hours. Finding himself thus, in his own words, "marooned," the Commander-in-Chief became both distressed and indignant.

His complaints induced the local Rear-Admiral to offer him a passage on the yacht *Triad,* which was leaving for Suvla at 4.15 p.m. On this accordingly the General embarked and reached Suvla Bay about 6 o'clock. Here he found the *Chatham* with Admiral de Robeck and Commodore Keyes on board. They expressed to him their profound uneasiness at the paralysis which seemed to have seized upon the troops. On the top of this came Colonel Aspinall. On hearing his report the Commander-in-Chief boarded the *Jonquil,* where he found General Stopford, tired from his walk on the

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

TERRITORIAL GUNNERS AT SUVLA.

An 18-pdr. gun in action against the Turks at Suvla. The 18-pdr., or field gun, did good service on Gallipoli, being both swift in manœuvre and effective in action.

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

HORSES ASHORE AT SUVLA.

Another scene after the landing at Suvla. The beach now presents an appearance more in keeping with an advanced base than is apparent in the photograph on page 731.

shore, but otherwise happy. General Stopford said that "everything was quite all right and going well." He proceeded to explain that the men had been very tired, that he had not been able to get water up to them or land his guns as quickly as he hoped; he had therefore decided to postpone the occupation of the high ground which "might lead to a regular battle" until next morning; that meanwhile the Brigadiers had been told to gain what ground they could without serious fighting, but that actually they had not occupied any dominating tactical point.

His Personal Intervention.

The Commander-in-Chief did not accept this result. He knew that reinforcements were marching southward from Bulair. He believed that the Anafarta Ridge was still unoccupied by any appreciable enemy force. He apprehended, and rightly, that what might be gained on the evening of the 8th without fighting, would involve a bloody struggle in the dawn. He urged an immediate advance on Ismail Oglu and Tekke hills. General Stopford raised a number of objections, and the Commander-in-Chief determined to visit the Divisional Headquarters on shore and see for himself. General Stopford did not accompany him.

General Hammersley, the Divisional Commander, was not able to give a very clear account of the situation, and after a considerable discussion the Commander-in-Chief determined personally to intervene. General Hammersley had told him that the 32nd Brigade was available in the neighbourhood of Sulajik and was capable

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

THE ARMY POST-OFFICE, SUVLA.

Everything is now orderly and shipshape at Suvla. The Post-Office is constructed, the mails have come in. Nothing essential is lacking save Anafarta and Scimitar Hill.

of moving forward. Sir Ian Hamilton thereupon told the Divisional Commander "in the most distinct terms that he wished this Brigade to advance and dig themselves in on the crest line." General Hammersley apparently concurred in this, and afterwards claimed that he had acted on his own responsibility, not as the result of a direct order, but of the expression of a wish personally made by the Commander-in-Chief. Accordingly after Sir Ian Hamilton had returned to the *Triad*, General Hammersley directed the 32nd Brigade to concentrate and endeavour to gain a foothold on the high ground north of Kuchuk Anafarta. He specially mentioned the 6th East Yorkshire Battalion as one that should be recalled from its existing position and concentrated. On these decisions darkness fell.

The 32nd Brigade was not, however, disposed as its Divisional Commander imagined. On the contrary, with praiseworthy initiative two battalions had pushed forward far in advance of the rest of the IXth Corps, and finding no opposition, one had occupied a good position near Abrikjar and the other was actually entrenching itself on Scimitar Hill. It is extraordinary that on such a quiet day this should not have been known at the Divisional Headquarters less than two miles away. Both these battalions were recalled from the positions which they had gained and were concentrated for the advance to Kuchuk Anafarta. These movements deranged the general plan of attack which was fixed for dawn; they involved the evacuation of the valuable position of Scimitar Hill, never afterwards, in spite of all efforts, to be regained. Nor in the end was it possible for the 32nd Brigade to make its attack until daybreak.

Attacks on the 9th and 10th at Suvla.

At dawn on the morning of the 9th the British advance from Suvla was at last resumed. The attack was delivered by the 11th Division, the 31st Brigade of the 10th Division, and by some battalions of the 53rd Territorial Division which had been newly landed, and was directed against the high ground from Kuchuk Anafarta on the left to Ismail Oglu Hill. Simultaneously, however, the counter-attack ordered by Liman von Sanders also began. The leading reinforcements from the 7th and 12th Turkish Divisions had arrived overnight, and the enemy was perhaps three times as strong as on the previous day and constantly increasing.

No sooner had the 6th East Yorkshire Battalion been withdrawn from Scimitar Hill than the Turks had reoccupied it. It was necessary that this hill should be taken before an effective advance could be made on its right against Ismail Oglu Hill. The 31st Brigade of the 10th Division therefore assaulted Scimitar Hill, but was unable to recapture it, and the whole of the right of the attack was prejudiced in consequence of the failure to regain this feature. The 32nd Brigade on the left of the line likewise failed to reach its goal, and in parts of the front the troops were driven back in disorder by the ardour with which the Turkish newcomers threw themselves into the fight.

The rest of the 53rd Division were landed during the 9th, and the battle was renewed on the morning of the 10th and maintained all day. Both Scimitar and Ismail Oglu Hills were partially captured, but were lost again under the pressure of violent counter-attacks. When night fell over the battlefield, lurid with the fiercely burning scrub, the IXth Corps occupied positions very little more advanced than those which it had gained on the first day of its landing, and ample Turkish forces stood entrenched and victorious upon all the decisive positions. The losses had not exceeded a thousand on the 7th, but nearly 8,000 officers and men were killed or wounded at Suvla Bay on the 9th and 10th.

* * * *

Mustapha Kemal's Counterstroke at Anzac.

The closing event of the battle has now to be recorded. When daylight

broke on the morning of the 10th the British from Anzac still held their hard-won positions on Chunuk Bair. Two battalions of the 13th Division—the 6th North Lancashires and the 5th Wiltshires—had relieved the worn-out troops who had stormed the hill. They had barely settled down in their new position when they were exposed to a tremendous attack.

After his successful action at Suvla Bay on the 9th, Mustapha Kemal passed the night in preparing a supreme effort to regain this priceless ridge. The whole of the Turkish 8th Division brought from the Asiatic shore with three additional battalions and aided by a powerful and converging artillery were led forward to the assault by Mustapha Kemal in person. The thousand British rifles—all for whom room could be found on the narrow summit — were engulfed and overwhelmed in this fierce flood. Very few of the Lancashire men escaped, and the Wiltshire battalion was literally annihilated.

Flushed with victory the Turks pressed over the summit and poured down the steep face of the mountain in dense waves of men intent on driving the invaders into the sea. But here they encountered directly the whole blast of fire from the Fleet and from every gun and machine gun in the Anzac-British line. Under this storm the advancing Turkish masses were effectively crushed. Of three or four thousand men who descended the seaward slopes of the hill, only a few hundred regained the crest. But there they stayed—and stayed till the end of the story. Thus by the 10th the whole of the second great effort to win the Straits had ended at all points without decisive gains.

Actions of the 15th and 21st.

Two serious actions had still to be fought before the failure was accepted as final. The 54th Territorial Division had now landed at Suvla, and with its support on the 15th and 16th two brigades of the 10th Irish Division attacked along the high Kiretch Tepe Sirt Ridge which bounds Suvla Bay on the north. Well supported by fire from the sea, these troops under General Mahon at first made good progress. But in the end they were compelled by counter-attacks and bombing to give up most of the ground they had gained. This action does not bulk very largely in British accounts, and its critical character seems scarcely to have been appreciated. Liman von Sanders says of it:—

"If during their attacks on August 15 and 16 the British had captured and held the Kiretch Tepe, the whole position of the 5th Army would have been outflanked. The British might have then achieved a decisive and final victory."

A further effort was made on August 21, directed this time to the capture of Ismail Oglu Hill. For this purpose the 29th Division was brought from Helles and the dismounted Yeomanry Division from Egypt to reinforce the 10th, 11th, 53rd and 54th Divisions, now all landed at Suvla Bay. Strong forces of the Anzac left under General Cox also co-operated.

But the Turks were now perfectly fortified and in great strength. Less than sixty guns, only sixteen of which were even of medium calibre, were available to support the attack, and for these the supply of ammunition was exiguous. The battle was fiercely fought in burning scrub and a sudden and unusual mist hampered the attacking artillery, and though the Anzac left gained and held some valuable ground, no general results were achieved.

"The attacks," said Liman von Sanders, "were repulsed by the Turks after heavy loss and after putting in the last reserve, including the cavalry." The British losses, particularly of the Yeomanry and the 29th Division, who assaulted with the utmost determination, were heavy and fruitless. On this dark battlefield of fog and flame Brigadier-General Lord Longford, Brigadier-General Kenna, V.C., Colonel Sir John Milbanke, V.C., and other paladins fell. This was the largest action fought upon the Peninsula, and

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

OVER THE TOP AT ANZAC.

This spirited photograph, taken in enfilade from another trench, shows Australasian troops advancing to attack a Turkish post. The picture conveys admirably the élan which at all times characterized the men from overseas.

it was destined to be the last. Since the new offensive had begun the British losses had exceeded 45,000, while those of the Turks were not less than 40,000. Already on the 16th Sir Ian Hamilton had telegraphed to Lord Kitchener stating that 50,000 additional rifles and drafts of 45,000 were required to enable offensive operations to be continued. These reinforcements, for reasons which the next chapter will explain, the British Government found themselves unable to supply, and a complete deadlock supervened along the fronts of both battered and exhausted armies.

The True Cause of Failure.

At every phase in the battle, down even to the last action on the 21st, the issue between victory and defeat hung trembling in the balance. The slightest change in the fell sequence of events would have been sufficient to turn the scale. But for the forty-eight precious hours lost by the IXth Corps at Suvla, positions must have been won from which decisive operations were possible.

"We all felt," wrote Sanders, "that the British leaders at the successive landings which began on August 6 stayed too long on the beach instead of pushing forward inland at all costs from each landing-place." Had the experienced 29th Division been employed at this point, had the Yeomanry from Egypt been made available from the beginning, success could hardly have been denied. When it was too late leaders of the highest quality—Byng, Fanshawe, Maude—were sent from France to replace those whose inertia or incapacity had produced such grievous results. These new Generals could be spared on the morrow of disaster, but not while their presence might have commanded success.

Criticism severe and searching has

been applied to many aspects of the Battle of Suvla Bay, but history will pronounce that it was not upon the Gallipoli Peninsula that it was lost. It is rarely that Opportunity returns. Yet in spite of the errors and misfortunes of the original operations, she had offered herself once more to our hand. But the golden moment was not in August. It was at the end of June or the beginning of July. And that moment was necessarily thrown away.

"After the failure of the attacks which followed the first landing," say the Dardanelles Commissioners (Conclusion 5), "there was undue delay in deciding upon the course to be pursued in the future. Sir Ian Hamilton's appreciation was forwarded on May 17. It was not considered by the War Council or the Cabinet until June 7. The reconstruction of the Government which took place at this most critical period was the main cause of the delay. As a consequence the despatch of the reinforcements asked for by Sir Ian Hamilton in his appreciation was postponed for six weeks."

Mistakes of Downing Street and Whitehall.

This delay and the neglect to utilize the surplus forces in Egypt robbed us of the numerical superiority which it was in our power to command and which was essential to a victorious offensive. Had a reasonable action been taken even from May 17 onwards, as will be seen from the table on page 740, 15 allied divisions aggregating 150,000 rifles, could have attacked 10 Turkish divisions aggregating 70,000 to 75,000 rifles in the second week of July. Instead the mistakes which were committed in Downing Street and Whitehall condemned us gratuitously to a battle of equal numbers in August and to a hazard of the most critical kind, and from that hazard we emerged unsuccessful. The errors and miscarriages which took place upon the battlefield cannot be concealed, but they stand on a lower plane than these sovereign and irretrievable misdirections.

The cause of defeat is set forth in the cruel clarity of tabular statement on page 740.

Photo: Central News.

CEMETERY BY THE WATERS OF THE ÆGEAN.

On the Peninsula it was often impossible to recover the bodies of men who fell in action. When this could be done the comrades of the fallen spared no pains to give them a fitting burial. Although materials were scanty, appropriate memorials were erected and the graves were frequently bordered by rows of stones from the beach.

THE RELATIVE STRENGTHS

Date.		Turkish Divisions: Rifles.	Actual British and French Divisions: Rifles.	Available[1] British and French Divisions: Rifles.
February 18 . . . (Opening of the Naval Attack)	(uncertain weather)	nil 5,000	nil 2,000	4 36,000
March 20 . . . (End of the Naval Attack)		2 14,000	4 40,000 (but without the 29th Division)	5 60,000
April 25 . . . . . (The first Military Attack)		6 42,000	5 50,000	5 60,000
July 7 . . . . . (Earliest date for the second Military Attack)		10 70,000–75,000	8 52,000	14 150,000[2]
August 7 . . . . . (The Battle of Suvla Bay)		20[4] 120,000	14 120,000	14 120,000[3]

The three favourable occasions are shown in squares. It needed only a stroke of the pen in Whitehall to have produced any of them.

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[1] "Available" means ready, doing nothing, capable of being sent so as to be on the spot on the date mentioned, and actually sent within a month of that date.

[2] British { From home: 29th, 42nd, 52nd, 10th, 11th, 13th, 53rd, 54th, and Royal Naval Divisions 9
From Egypt: Yeomanry Division, Indian Division, and various details . . . 2
Australasian: The Australian and New Zealand Army Corps 2
The French Corps (1 Division with additional Units) 1
Total 14

[3] The reduction of 10,000 from the July figures is accounted for by a month's net wastage among the divisions already on the Peninsula.

[4] The following are the Turkish Divisions on the spot: 1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th, 5th, 6th, 7th, 8th, 9th, 10th, 11th, 12th, 13th, 14th, 15th, 16th, 19th, 20th, 26th and 27th.

CHAPTER LII

THE RUIN OF THE BALKANS[1]

Jealousies of the Balkan States—Their Common Interests—Baffling Policy of the Great Allies—The Russian Defeats—Waiting on the Dardanelles—Serbian Obstinacy—Consequences of the Battle of Suvla Bay—A New Tremendous Event—Decision for a Great Offensive in France—My Protest and Warning—"We Have to Make War as We Must"—The Dardanelles Army Left to Languish—An Extraordinary Incident—General Sarrail's Plan—General Joffre's Promise—Bulgaria Begins to Move—The Battle of Loos and Champagne—Bulgaria Mobilizes—Repercussion on Greece—King Constantine Dismisses Venizelos—The Advice of the Experts—The Cabinet Compromises—The French Decision—The Final Offer of the British Government—The Storm Bursts on Serbia.

THE Christian States of the Balkans were the children of oppression and revolt.

Jealousies of the Balkan States.

For four hundred years they had dwelt under the yoke of the Turkish conqueror. They had recovered their freedom after cruel struggles only during the last hundred years. Their national characteristics were marked by these hard experiences. Their constitutions and dynasties resulted from them. Their populations were poor, fierce and proud. Their governments were divided from one another by irreconcilable ambitions and jealousies. Every one of them at some ancient period in its history had been the head of a considerable Empire in these regions, and though Serbian and Bulgarian splendours had been of brief duration compared to the glories of Greece, each looked back to this period of greatness as marking the measure of its historic rights. All therefore simultaneously considered themselves entitled to the ownership of territories which they had in bygone centuries possessed only in succession. All therefore were plunged in convulsive quarrels and intrigues.

It is to this cause that their indescribable sufferings have been mainly and primarily due. It was not easy for all or any of these small States to lift themselves out of this dismal and dangerous quagmire or find a firm foothold on which to stand. Behind the national communities, themselves acting and reacting upon each other in confusion, there were in each country party and political divisions and feuds sufficient to shake a powerful Empire. Every Balkan statesman had to thread his way to power in his own country through complications, dangers and surprising transformations, more violent, more intense than those which the domestic affairs of great nations revealed. He arrived hampered by his past and pursued by foes and jealousies, and, thus harassed and weakened, had to cope with the ever-shifting combinations of Balkan politics, as these in turn were influenced by the immense convulsions of the Great War.

In addition to all this came the policy of the three great allied Powers. France and Russia had each its own interests and outlook, its favourite Balkan State and its favourite party in each State. Great Britain had a vague desire to see them all united, and a lofty impartiality and detachment scarcely less baffling. To this were super-added the distracting influences of the various Sovereigns and their Teutonic origins or relations. In consequence, the situation was so

[1] See general map of the Balkan Peninsula on page 743.

chaotic and unstable, there were so many vehement points of view rising and falling, that British, French and Russian statesmen never succeeded in devising any firm, comprehensive policy. On the contrary, by their isolated, half-hearted and often contradictory interventions, they contributed that culminating element of disorder which led every one of these small States successively to the most hideous forms of ruin.

Their Common Interests.

Yet all the time the main interests of the three great Allies and of the four Balkan kingdoms were identical, and all could have been protected and advanced by a single and simple policy. The ambitions of every one of the Balkan States could have been satisfied at the expense of the Turkish and Austrian Empires. There was enough for all, and more than enough. The interest of the three great Allies was to range the Balkan States against these Empires. United among themselves, the Balkan States were safe: joined to the three Allies, they could not fail to gain the territories they coveted. The addition of the united Balkan States to the forces of the Entente must have involved the downfall of Austria and Turkey and the speedy, victorious termination of the war. For everyone there was a definite prize. For Roumania, Transylvania; for Serbia, Bosnia and Herzegovina, Croatia, Dalmatia and the Banat of Temesvar; for Bulgaria, Adrianople and the Enos-Midia line; for Greece, Smyrna and its hinterland; and for all, safety, wealth and power.

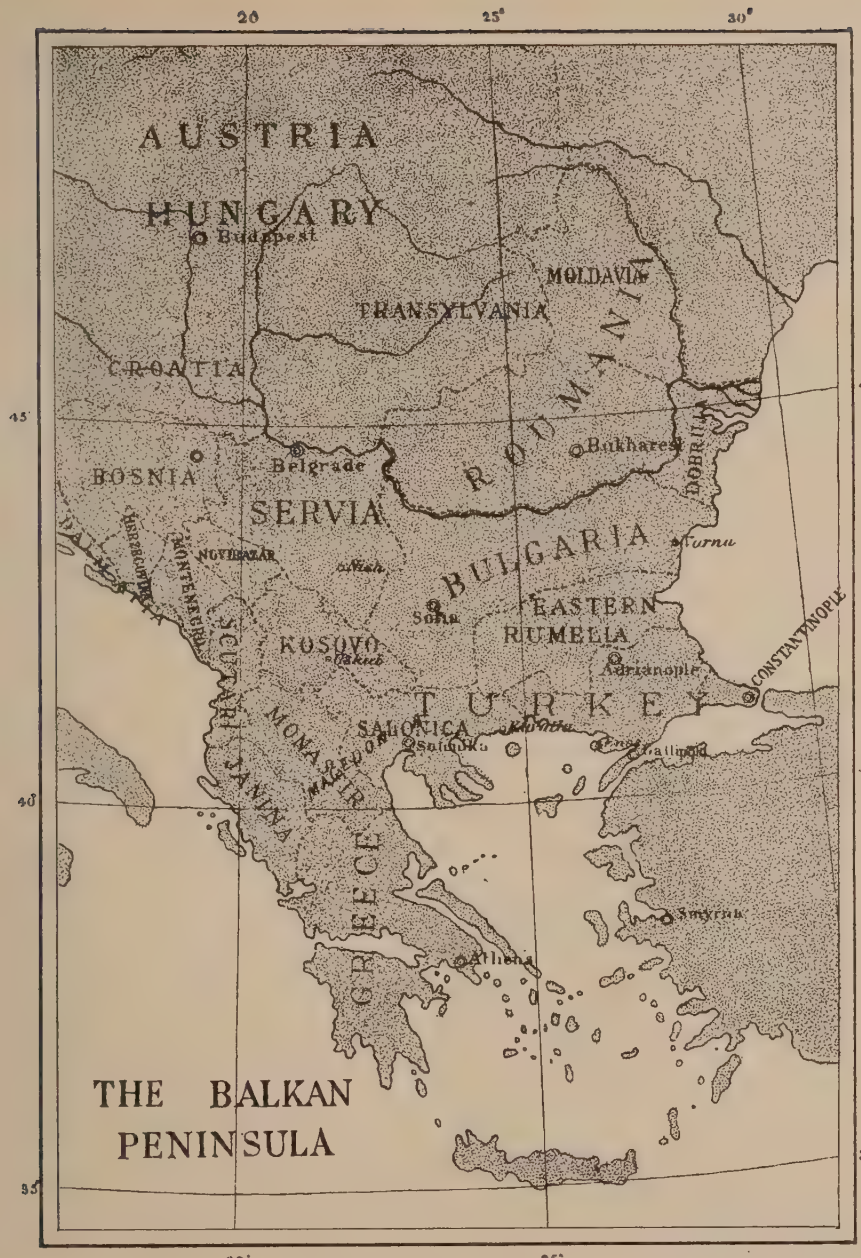
To realize these advantages, certain concessions had to be made by the Balkan States among themselves. Roumania could restore the Dobrudja to Bulgaria; Serbia could liberate the Bulgarian districts of Macedonia; Greece could give Kavalla as a makeweight; and as an immediate solatium to Greece, there was Cyprus which could have been thrown into the scale. As the final levers, there were the financial resources of Great Britain and whatever military and naval forces the Entente might decide to employ in this theatre.

Baffling Policy of the Great Allies.

It is astonishing that when all interests were the same, when so many powerful means of leverage and stimulus were at hand, everything should without exception have gone amiss. If in February, 1915, or possibly after the Turkish declaration of war in November, 1914, the British, French and Russian Governments could have agreed upon a common policy in the Balkans—and had sent plenipotentiaries of the highest order to the Balkan Peninsula to negotiate on a clear, firm basis with each and all of these States — a uniform, coherent action could have been devised and enforced with measureless benefits to all concerned. Instead, the situation was dealt with by partial expedients suggested by the rapid and baffling procession of events. Everything was vainly offered or done by the Allies successively and tardily, which done all at once and in good time would have achieved the result.

The Balkan States offered by far the greatest possibility open to allied diplomacy at the beginning of 1915. This was never envisaged and planned as if it were the great battle which indeed it was. Fitful, sporadic, half-hearted, changeable, unrelated expedients were all that the statesmen of Russia, France and Britain were able to employ.

Nor is it right for public opinion in these countries to condemn the Balkan States and Balkan politicians or sovereigns too sweepingly. The hesitations of the King of Roumania, the craft of King Ferdinand, the shifts and evasions of King Constantine, all arose from the baffling nature of the Balkan problem and the lack of policy of the Allies. Serbia, indeed, fought on desperately and blindly without consideration for any other interests but her own and with frightful consequences to herself, ultimately repaired only by the final victory. Roumania was throughout in peril of her life and perplexed to the foundations of her being. When at



THE BALKAN PENINSULA.

Map showing the strategic relation, one to the other, of those Balkan States whose neutral attitude was so disturbing to the chief antagonists during the early stages of the war. With Serbia numbered in the ranks of the enemy, with Bulgaria, Roumania and Greece neutral, it can hardly be a matter for wonder that Falkenhayn, however unwilling he may have been, felt irresistibly drawn to the Eastern Front in order to find a passage for those munitions of war so anxiously awaited by the defenders of the Dardanelles.

last, after infinite hesitations, bargainings and precautions, she entered the war, she was too late to decide or abridge the struggle but in good time to be torn in pieces.

Bulgaria turned traitor alike to her past and to her future, and after many exertions was plunged in the woe of the vanquished. Greece, rescued in the nick of time by courage and genius, and emerging with little cost upon the side of the victors, survived incorrigible to squander all that she had gained. Yet in Roumania there was Také Jonesco always pointing clear and true; in Bulgaria, Stambulisky, braving the wrath of King Ferdinand and marching proudly to his long prison with the names of England and Russia on his lips; and in Greece, Venizelos, threading his way through indescribable embarrassments and triumphing over unimaginable difficulties, preserved his country for a time in spite of herself and might well have limited the miseries of Europe.

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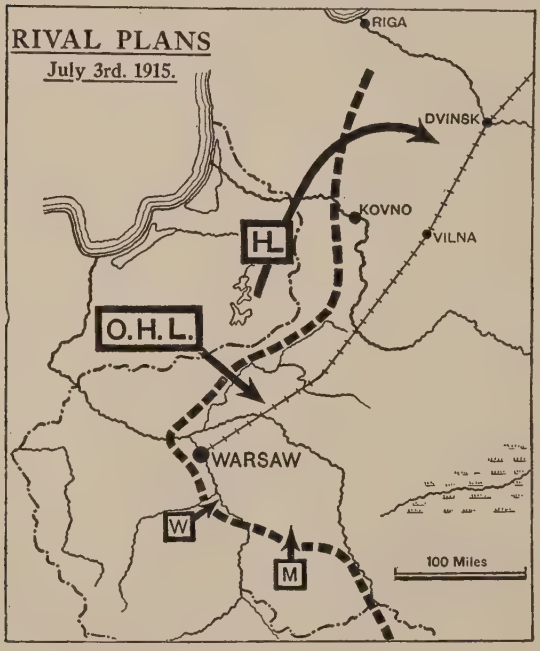


THE RIVAL PLANS OF O.H.L. AND HL.

After the German thrust between Gorlice and Tarnow and the consequent retreat of the Russian armies in the Carpathians, the directing minds of the German forces were momentarily perplexed. After Gorlice-Tarnow, what to do? Falkenhayn, thinking of the threat to the Dardanelles and with the Western Front still on his mind, wanted to stop. In the end it was decided that Mackensen should continue his march. This, after some reorganization, he did. On June 22 Lemberg fell. It was next proposed that Mackensen should wheel to the north while HL carried out a similar movement to the south in order to bite off the Polish salient. HL proposed a much wider sweep round Kovno to cut the vital Warsaw–Petrograd railway. At a conference held at Posen, at which the Kaiser was present, it was finally decided that the northern claw of the crab should advance across the Narev, that is, further to the south than even Falkenhayn desired. The sketch map given here illustrates the contending views of O.H.L. and HL as to the path the attack from the north should follow.

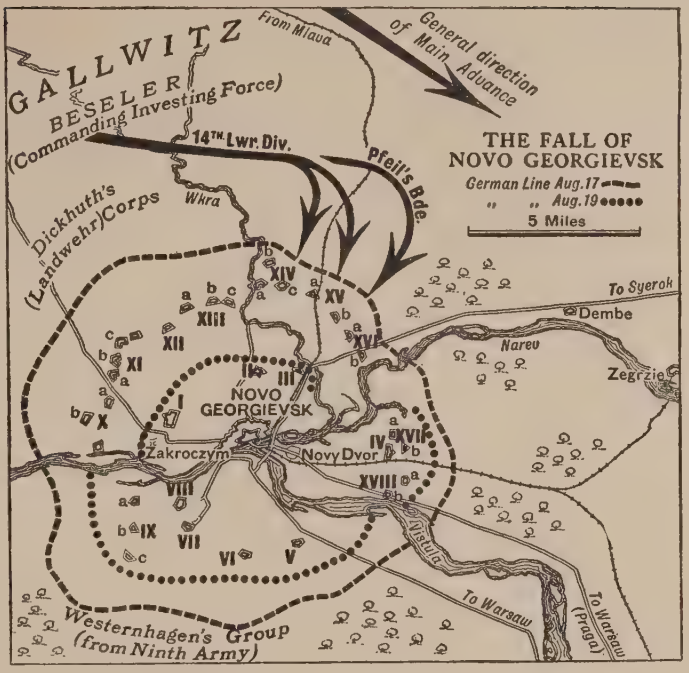
The Russian Defeats.

August, 1915, saw the culmination of the Russian disasters. By the end of June the German-Austrian offensive had driven the Russians out of nearly all the southern half of their huge Galician-Polish salient. This had been reduced to a semicircle 170 miles across, with Brest-Litovsk at its centre and Warsaw almost on its outer circumference. Lemberg had been lost. Mackensen's front was now faced almost north and ahead of him lay the four railway lines which fed the salient.

On July 13 he commenced, with a German and two Austrian Armies, an advance against the southernmost railway [the Kowel-Cholm-Lublin-Ivangorod line], with Field-Marshal Woyrsch on his left pressing eastward. By August 1 he was across the railway in the centre at Cholm and Lublin, and four days later Ivangorod and Warsaw were evacuated by the Russians. Novo-Georgievsk, where some eighty-five thousand second-class troops had been collected, made a show of defence, but capitulated on the 20th.

But this was not the end of the disasters. In the north, in Lithuania, the German Eighth and Tenth Armies under Hin-

denburg, reinforced by German troops from the south where the line had been shortened, moved forward, and on August 10 had taken Kovno. All the Russian troops between Kovno and Riga were thus in danger of envelopment and fell back. Even Brest-Litovsk, the long-vaunted model fortress, did not hold out long. Invested on August 11 on three sides, it was abandoned on the 26th after the forts on the south-west front had been stormed. Thus the last semblance of the great salient had disappeared, and the Russian front, except for a forward bend covering Riga, had approximated to a north and south line.

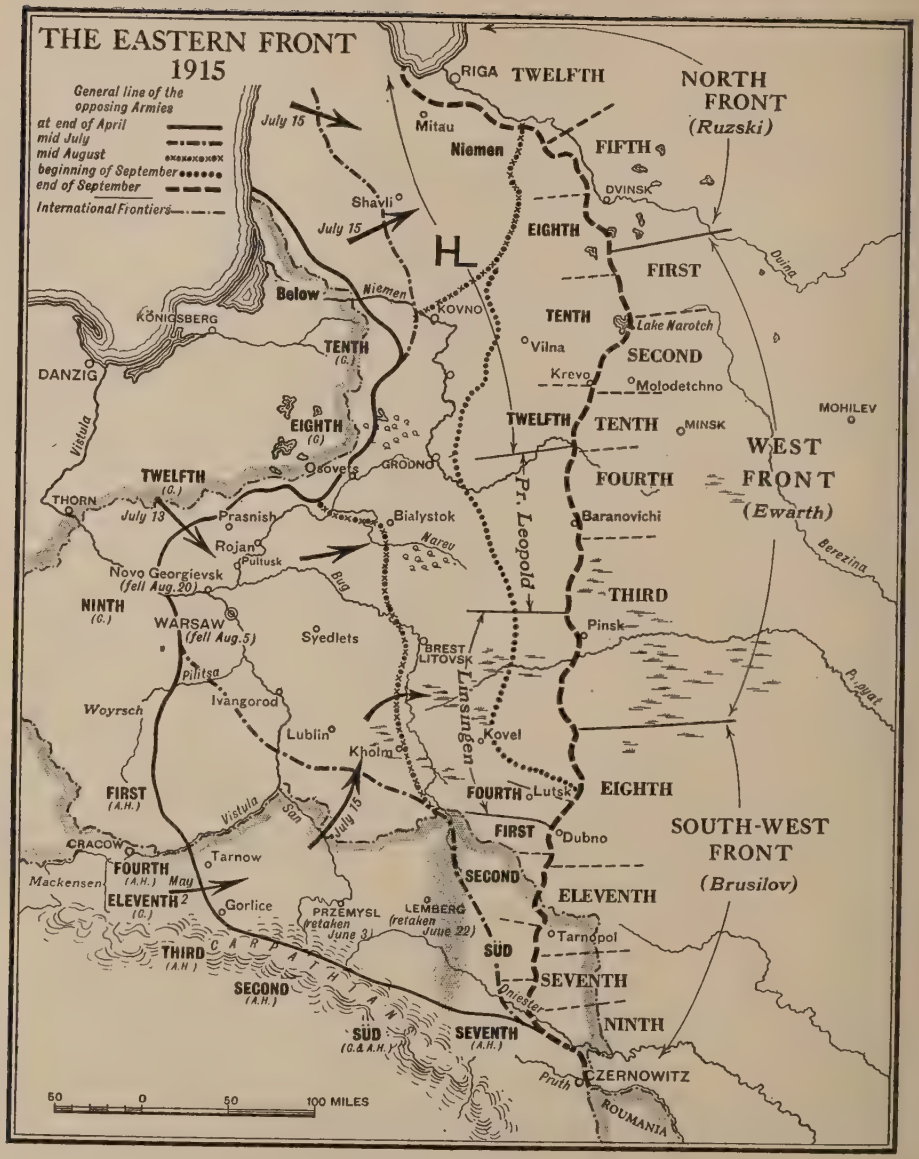


THE FALL OF NOVO GEORGIEVSK.

The new advance began on July 13, 1915, with its threat to Warsaw, to the Polish salient and to the Russians on that part of the front. The Grand Duke Nicholas, however, was not caught. He retreated in good time, but for some obscure reason decided to hold Novo Georgievsk, an obsolete fortress to the north-west of Warsaw. Here he left a garrison of 90,000 militia. To the investment of Novo Georgievsk the attention of HL now turned. Warsaw was evacuated by the Russian forces on August 5, and by August 17 a German invading force under General von Beseler had surrounded Novo Georgievsk. Three days later the defenders, after slaughtering their horses and burning their stores, surrendered the fortress, some 90,000 Russians, the entire garrison, and 700 guns being taken by the Germans.

The Russians had evaded envelopment and capture, but all their gains in Galicia had gone, they had lost Poland, 325,000 prisoners, and more than three thousand guns, besides rifles and equipment which it was impossible to replace. Worse than all, the Czar was induced to remove the Grand Duke Nicholas from his command and send him to the Caucasus.

The Russian defeats from April onwards had reacted most unfortunately against Italy. In 1914 Austria could spare no more than local corps to watch the Italian frontier. By the date of the Italian declaration of war she had managed to collect 122 battalions, 10 squadrons and 216 guns against Italy, disposed in mixed groups behind carefully constructed entrenchments. But henceforward there was a constant flow of reinforcements from the Galician theatre. The Italian offensive towards Trieste, known as the first and second battles of the Isonzo, in June and July carried the Italians six miles into enemy territory, and thereafter left them as firmly rooted in trench warfare as the armies on the Western Front. The Italian operations in the Tyrol led to no more than the occupation of five small separate salients of Austrian territory. Thus to the Russian disasters was added the Italian deadlock: and



THE EASTERN FRONT, 1915.

The summer of 1915 was disastrous for the toiling Russians. Short of munitions and with little hope of replenishing his stores of war material, stricken by repeated blows from formidable and determined German forces, the Grand Duke Nicholas was forced to withdraw and shorten his line. In the year's campaign the Germans killed and wounded nearly a million Russians and took three-quarters of a million prisoners. At the end of September the Russian line, as may be seen from the map given here, reached from Riga, due south, to the Roumanian frontier. It was at this moment that the Czar, against the warnings of his Ministers, decided to assume personal command of his armies. The Grand Duke Nicholas was relegated to the command against Turkey in the Caucasus.

both exercised a fatal influence upon the Bulgarian mind.

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Waiting on the Dardanelles.

Nevertheless all eyes in the Balkans were riveted on the Gallipoli Peninsula until the result of the Battle of Suvla Bay became known. Till it was lost the Bulgarians held their hand, and in the month of July there were still hopeful possibilities of bringing them in on the side of the Allies.

The Austro-German attack upon Serbia which seemed so imminent in February had not matured during all the months of the summer. The deep anxieties with which some members of the Cabinet viewed this great danger were happily not borne out as the months slipped away. I know of no cause for the delay of this attack other than the influence exercised upon the Balkan States and upon Bulgaria by the operations at the Dardanelles, and the belief so widely held throughout the Balkan States that England would never relinquish such an effort without achieving success. The continued fighting on the Gallipoli Peninsula, the knowledge that large reinforcements were pouring out, and that another great trial of strength in that theatre was impending, dominated the action of Bulgaria; and the action of Bulgaria was the fact which in turn governed the Austro-German attack on Serbia.

Serbian Obstinacy.

I was strongly of opinion during the month of July that we ought not to stake the whole Balkan policy solely on the result of a battle in Gallipoli, but that, while doing everything in our power to secure a victory there, we should also strive to win Bulgaria. This could be done only by territorial concessions forced upon Greece and Serbia, combined with the granting of loans and the expectation of success in the Dardanelles.

The imminent peril in which Serbia stood, and the restricted conditions under which the Allies could afford her

Photo: Illustrations Bureau.

WOMEN HELPING TO DIG TRENCHES AT WARSAW.

The Grand Duke Nicholas had not had it in mind to evacuate Warsaw without offering some resistance. Soldiers and civilians, even women, were pressed into service to dig trenches. When the formidable nature of the German plan was disclosed it was soon evident that the city was doomed, and in consequence the army, plus some 350,000 of the inhabitants, evacuated the city.

protection, made it indispensable that she should cede, and if necessary be made to surrender, the uncontested zone in Macedonia to the Bulgarians, to whom it belonged by race, by history, by treaty, and—until it was taken from them in the second Balkan War—by conquest. Serbia, even when at the last gasp during the first Austrian attack upon her in 1914, had found it necessary to keep large numbers of troops in the Bulgarian districts of Macedonia to hold down the native population.

Right and reason, the claims of justice, and the most imperious calls of necessity, alike counselled the Serbians to surrender at least the uncontested zone. To the ordinary exhortations of diplomacy were added special appeals by the Sovereigns and the Rulers of the allied countries. The Prince Regent of Serbia was besought by the Czar, by the President of the French Republic, and by King George V, to make a concession right in itself, necessary in the common cause, vital to the safety of Serbia. But to all these appeals the Serbian Government and Parliament proved obdurate. The allied diplomacy, moving ponderously forward—every telegram and measure having to be agreed to by all the other parties to the alliance—had just reached the point of refusing any further supplies of stores or money to Serbia unless she complied with their insistent demand, when the final invasion began.

The same sort of thing happened about Kavalla. M. Venizelos, with his almost unerring judgment of great issues, was prepared to imperil his whole personal popularity in Greece and place himself at a deadly disadvantage in his controversies with the King by intimating his readiness to acquiesce in the cession to Bulgaria of Kavalla in certain circumstances. Had the Allies been able to secure for Bulgaria the immediate cession of the uncontested zone in Macedonia and the port of Kavalla, it seems very probable that they might have been induced during the month of July to come to our aid and to march on Adrianople.

It seems certain that, even if this full result had not been obtained, the tangible cession of this territory to Bulgaria at the instance of the Allies would have made it impossible for King Ferdinand to carry his country into the hostile camp. Monsieur Radoslavoff gave in brutally frank language a perfectly truthful account of the Bulgarian position in these months. No effective measures were however taken, and all was left to the hazard of the battle on the Gallipoli Peninsula.

Consequences of the Battle of Suvla Bay.

It would be unjust not to recognize at the same time the extraordinary difficulties with which Sir Edward Grey was confronted owing to the need of combining the diplomatic action of four separate great Powers in so delicate and painful a business as virtually coercing a then friendly Greece and an allied and suffering Serbia, specially shielded by Russia, to make territorial concessions deeply repugnant to them. Although a united diplomacy might have assisted, nothing less than a decisive victory at the Dardanelles could at this time have counteracted in the Balkans the terrible tide of Russian defeat.

By the end of the third week in August all prospects of an immediate victory at this vital point had vanished. When our failure was fully appreciated by the competent military personages at Sofia, the Bulgarian King and Government finally made up their minds to join Germany. From that moment the ruin of Serbia was certain and irremediable. The quaking dyke of the Dardanelles campaign that had so long held off the deluge had yielded at last. It was henceforth only a question of the time-tables of Austro-German troop movements. Serbia, however, though fully conscious of her danger, remained recalcitrant to all appeals to make effective concessions. Till the last moment she kept her heel on the conquered Bulgarian districts of Macedonia, and maintained a stubborn front to the overwhelming forces that were gathering against her.

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A New Tremendous Event.

A new tremendous event was now to strike across this darkening situation. At a Conference held at Calais early in July, the representatives of the Cabinet, viz. the Prime Minister, Lord Kitchener and Mr. Balfour, had, in accordance with the convictions of the overwhelming majority of their colleagues, argued against a further Anglo-French offensive in the west in 1915. They had proposed that the allied operations in France and Flanders should be confined to what was described as an "offensive defensive" or, to speak more accurately, an active defensive. The French had agreed; General Joffre had agreed. The agreement was open and formal. And it was on this basis that we had looked forward and prepared for the new battle on the Gallipoli Peninsula.

No sooner, however, had General Joffre left the Conference than, notwithstanding these agreements, he had calmly resumed the development of his plans for his great attack in Champagne, in which he confidently expected to break the German lines and roll them back. It was not until after the Battle of Suvla Bay had been finally lost, and we were more deeply committed in the Peninsula than ever before, that we became aware of this.

To avoid unnecessary circulation of secret documents it had been arranged that members of the War Committee wishing to read the daily War Office telegrams could do so each morning at the War Office in Lord Kitchener's ante-room. It was my practice to read every word every day.

Decision for a Great Offensive in France.

On the morning of August 21 I was thus engaged when the private secretary informed me that Lord Kitchener, who had just returned from the French Headquarters, wished to see me. I entered his room and found him standing with his back to the light. He looked at me sideways with a very odd expression on his face. I saw he had some disclosure of importance to make, and waited. After appreciable hesitation he told me that he had agreed with the French to a great offensive in France. I said at once that there was no chance of success. He said the scale would be greater than anything ever before conceived; if it succeeded, it would restore everything, including of course the Dardanelles.

He had an air of suppressed excitement, like a man who has taken a great decision of terrible uncertainty and is about to put it into execution. He was of course bracing himself for the announcement he had to make that morning to the War Committee and to the Cabinet. I continued unconvinced. It was then 11 o'clock, and he drove me across in his car to Downing Street.

The Committee assembled. Lord Kitchener had no doubt apprised the Prime Minister beforehand, and he was immediately invited to make his statement. He told us that owing to the situation in Russia he could not longer maintain the attitude which was agreed upon in conjunction with the French at Calais, i.e. that a real serious offensive on a large scale in the west should be postponed until the Allies were ready. As he put it to us, he had himself urged upon General Joffre the adoption of the offensive. In view of the fact that, as we now know, the French plans and preparations had long been in progress, had indeed never been interrupted, this must have been a work of supererogation.

My Protest and Warning.

I immediately protested against departure from the decisions of the Cabinet maturely made and endorsed by the Calais Conference, and against an operation that could only lead to useless slaughter on a gigantic scale. I pointed out that we had neither the ammunition nor the superiority in men necessary to warrant such an assault on the enemy's fortified line; that it could not take place in time effectively to relieve Russia; that it would not prevent the Germans from pursuing their initiative in theatres other than the west; and that it would rupture fatally our plans for opening the

Photo: Photopress.

GERMAN REGIMENTS ENTER WARSAW.

One of the German regimental bands marching through Warsaw headed by a "Jingling Johnny." A Turkish invention, with horse-tails and small pieces of brass suspended from the crosspiece and central pole, this instrument was introduced into the Prussian Army bands by Frederick the Great.

Dardanelles. The following record has been preserved of these remarks :—

"*Mr. Churchill* expressed his regret at such a course. The German forces on the Western Front had not been reduced and were some 2,000,000 against the Allies 2,500,000. This amounted to a superiority for the Allies of five to four, which was inadequate for the offensive. Since our last offensive effort our relative strength had not altered, while the German defences had been strengthened.

"It seemed to him that in the hope of relieving Russia and to gratify our great and natural desire to do so, the Allies might throw away 200,000 or 300,000 lives[1] and [much] ammunition, and might possibly gain a little ground. The attack on May 9 (Festubert-Arras) had been a failure, and the line had not been altered by it. *After* an expenditure of lives and ammunition in this way by us, the Germans would have a chance worth seizing, and it would be worth their while to bring back great forces from the east. A superiority of two to one was laid down as necessary to attack, and we (the Allies) had not got it."

[1] Obviously this should read "men," meaning men killed and wounded, i.e. casualties.

"We have to make war as we must."

These views were not seriously disputed, but it was urged that the French would move in any case, and that if we did not march too, the alliance would be destroyed. Lord Kitchener was careful not to hold out any expectation of "a decisive success," and when pressed to define "a decisive success" he accepted my expression "a fundamental strategic alteration of the line." "There is," he said, "a great deal of truth in what Mr. Churchill has said, but unfortunately we have to make war as we must and not as we should like to."

I besought the Cabinet, which followed the War Council an hour later, not to yield to the French impatience without a further conference at which all the arguments could be stated and a final appeal made. I was strongly supported by others. I was forced to admit that if the French, after hearing what we had to say, still persisted in their intention, we should of course have to conform; but I urged that a last effort should be made to avert the vast, futile and disastrous slaughter that was now impending.

Sir John French, who was in London, was interrogated by the Cabinet. He also declined to give any assurance of success, and was further extremely dissatisfied with the particular sector of attack in which he was required to operate. He had not ammunition for more than seven days' offensive battle. Nevertheless he was quite ready, if ordered, to throw himself into it with a good heart. I visited him

privately at Lancaster Gate, where he was staying for the night, and urged my opinion. He used the usual arguments about the necessity of acting in harmony with the French, and then unfolded to me the fact that General Joffre intended to employ no fewer than forty divisions in the French sector of attack alone. Although I must admit that the tremendous scale of the operation seemed to carry the issue into the region of the unknown, I continued recalcitrant and quitted my friend in the deepest anxiety. I saw that we were confronted with the ruin of the campaign alike in the east and in the west.

Photo: Photopress.

A GREAT BRIDGE DESTROYED.

One of the military precautions made necessary by the evacuation of Warsaw was the destruction of the great bridges over the Vistula. The bridge shown above spanned the Vistula between Warsaw and the Praga suburb. For some time before the evacuation all the bridges were mined and wired ready for the final scene.

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The Dardanelles Army Left to Languish.

The decision to make a general attack in France involved the immediate starvation, or at any rate malnutrition, in ammunition and in drafts, of the army on the Gallipoli Peninsula. Although large numbers of men had to be sent thither merely to keep Sir Ian Hamilton's units in the field, this number, while enough to be a heavy loss elsewhere, was not sufficient to produce any useful result. The operations on the Peninsula came to a standstill, and the Turks hastened to replace their heavy losses and reorganize their shaken and in some cases shattered formations.

Meanwhile, disease and despondency were at work in our own army. The anguish of supreme success narrowly but fatally missed, the sense of being ill-supported from home, the uncertainty about the future intentions of the Government, the shortage of ammunition, the threatening advent of winter, the rigorous privations of officers and men, exposed the Dardanelles army to the most melancholy ordeal. The numerous and powerful opponents of the enterprise, the advocates of evacuation, the partisans of competing schemes, found themselves well supplied with all that they desired. In these depressing conditions only the patient endurance of the British troops and the unquenchable spirit of Anzac enabled a firm posture of the army and its consequent existence to be maintained.

An Extraordinary Incident.

But now a very curious incident occurred, which added greatly to the perplexities of the British Government. The political power and influence of General Sarrail rested upon foundations which it was not easy then precisely to define or explain. This officer, having been removed by General Joffre in July from the Verdun command in which he had distinguished himself, had obtained, through profound political

influence, the command of the French troops in the Orient in succession to General Gouraud, who had been seriously wounded. Whatever dispute there might be about his military achievements, his irreligious convictions were above suspicion. There appeared to be an understanding in French governing circles that he was to be assigned an important independent rôle in the east, which would give him the opportunity of gathering the military laurels from which the French Radical-Socialist elements were determined anti-Clerical generals should not be debarred.

Judge of our astonishment when, on September 1, in the midst of the preparations for a supreme battle in France, while our own army at the Dardanelles was cut to the barest minimum in drafts and ammunition, the Admiralty suddenly received, through the French naval attaché, the request to assist the French Ministry of Marine in dispatching from Marseilles four new French divisions to the Dardanelles!

General Sarrail's Plan.

We were then informed that the French Government had decided to form a separate Army of the East, of six divisions, which, under the command of General Sarrail, would during the month of October land on the Asiatic shore of the Dardanelles, and advance thence upon the forts of Chanak in conjunction with our renewed attacks upon the Gallipoli Peninsula. We were requested to arrange for the relief of the two French divisions at Helles, in order that, added to the four new French divisions from France, this separate army should be constituted for the new operation.

It appeared for a space that what the most unanswerable arguments of reason, of daring, and of duty could not achieve, were to be easily secured by the interplay of French political forces. For once the gloomy embarrassments of our councils were broken by the sunlight of a happy hour. We made haste to accept the French proposal. Lord Kitchener instantly promised the two divisions to relieve the French at Helles. Mr. Balfour began at once to gather the necessary transport. Mr. Bonar Law joined with me in pressing the dispatch of still larger British forces, to "make a good job of it."

Alas for the British Cabinet! They saw the truth quite clearly. They were sound and right in their general view. It was not through wrong judgment that they failed, but through want of will-power. In such times the Kingdom of Heaven can only be taken by storm.

General Joffre's Promise.

But then the question arose, "Was it possible General Joffre could have agreed?" Inquiry showed that he had agreed upon conditions. His own position was not so secure as to leave him indifferent to the pressure from the political left flank. He had been forced to manœuvre. His conditions were that the reinforcing divisions for the Dardanelles were not to leave France before the main shock of his impending battle had occurred, nor until it could be seen whether its results would be decisive or not.

Pressed on September 11, at Calais, by Lord Kitchener as to the time which it would take to ascertain this, he stated that he would know at the end of the first week's fighting one way or the other; that if it was clear by then that a general German retreat in the west—which would have to be followed up by every available man—was not going to be compelled, all the troops assigned to the Dardanelles would be released. October 10 was the date fixed for the embarkation of the leading divisions. It was noticed, however, that General Sarrail, instead of hurrying out to the Dardanelles to survey the situation on the spot and perfect his plans, as Lord Kitchener strongly pressed him to do, preferred to remain in Paris attending to matters which were doubtless of importance.

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Bulgaria Begins to Move.

On September 20 the sinister news reached London that a Bulgarian

mobilization was imminent and that Bulgaria was believed to have committed herself definitely to the Central Powers. On the next day the Bulgarian Prime Minister told a meeting of his followers that the cause of the Allies was lost; that Bulgaria must not attach herself to the losing side; that the Quadruple Alliance had only made vague proposals to Bulgaria about the occupation of the uncontested zone *after* the war; and that if Bulgaria went to war, she was assured of the neutrality of Roumania. At midnight on the 22nd, the Turks signed an agreement ceding the Dedeagatch Railway to Bulgaria; and that same day Serbia signalled with alarm the increasing movement of Austro-German forces towards her northern frontier. The long-dreaded southward thrust was about to begin.

It is significant that while Bulgaria had patiently awaited the result of the Battle of Suvla Bay before taking her ghastly plunge, her rulers did not hesitate to commit themselves on the eve of the far larger battle which was known to be impending in France. The Germans could not fail to note the massing of guns and troops in Artois and Champagne, and had in fact made all preparations to receive the shock. But their confidence in the result was shared by the Bulgarian General Staff.

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The Battle of Loos and Champagne.

At dawn on September 25 the great battle in the west began. It comprised a subsidiary attack by about thirty British and French divisions at Loos, and a main attack by forty French divisions in Champagne. Sir John French had been compelled, in order to combine with the French, to accept a sphere of attack against his better judgment; but, having agreed to conform to General Joffre's plans, he threw himself into their execution with his customary determination.

The French attack in Champagne has since been described as "the unlimited method"—i.e. the armies were hurled on to advance as far as they could "into the blue," in the confident expectation that they would carry, not merely the front systems, which had been subjected to bombardment, but all intact positions and defences likely to be met with in rear. In the absurd misconceptions of the Staff, large masses of cavalry were brought up to press the victory to a decisive conclusion. At the fatal signal the brave armies marched into the firestorm. The ardour of the French infantry was not unmatched by their British comrades. The issue, however, was never in doubt. The German calculations of the strength of their front and of the numbers of troops needed to defend it were accurate and sound. Their drive against Russia, their project against the Balkans proceeded unchecked. In the first week the Anglo-French attack had secured slight advances of no strategic significance at various points, a few score of guns, and a few thousand prisoners, at the expense of more than 300,000 casualties.

The time had now come for General Joffre to release the troops for the east, but he was naturally reluctant to admit defeat. The downfall of his hopes was concealed by a continuance of the fighting, and the departure of the Dardanelles divisions receded week by week. Meanwhile, the winter season steadily approached the army on the Peninsula, and the catastrophe of the Balkans arrived.

Bulgaria Mobilizes.

On September 25 the general mobilization of the Bulgarian Army had begun. Those who placed reliance on the optimistic accounts of the fighting in France which were supplied by the military authorities here and in France found it impossible to believe that the Germans, faced by such formidable assaults in the west, and extended in immense operations in the east, could spare a new army to conquer Serbia, and they therefore continued incredulous to the last.

During the third and fourth weeks of September the concentration of considerable Austro-German forces north of the Danube became unmistakable. On October 4 our Intelligence reported the

From a drawing by F. Matania.

HIGHLANDERS AT THE BATTLE OF LOOS.

There are certain moments in war when Press and amateur photographers do not ply their art. The only means left, therefore, of obtaining some pictorial record of stirring events is for an artist to build up a scene from the accounts of eye-witnesses. In the case of the above picture the episode was described by a soldier who took part in the action.

presence of Mackensen at Temesvar. Belated and frantic efforts to deter the Bulgarians, exhausting the whole apparatus of promises and threats, were received with sullen impassivity, and the mobilization of the Bulgarian armies proceeded regularly. King Ferdinand pursued his profoundly considered and most perilous policy with mechanical precision. An iron discipline gripped the peasant soldiers, and a ruthless suppression quelled the parliamentary forces. Serbia, unreasonable to the last, prepared to meet her doom with passionate appeals to her Allies and dauntless heroism in the field.

Repercussion on Greece.

The repercussion of these events must now be studied. The only power which could come to the aid of Serbia before it was too late was Greece. Accordingly, at last, an earnest and united effort was made by all the Allies to procure the entry of Greece into the general war. Twice she had placed herself at their disposal. Twice she had been rebuffed. Now it was the turn of the Allies to ask.

By treaty Greece was obliged to aid Serbia against a Bulgarian attack. King Constantine and the Greece that followed him claimed that this treaty did not apply to a war in which Serbia was attacked not only by Bulgaria but by a great Power. Serbia invoked the treaty, demanded the support of Greece, and also appealed to the Allies for 150,000 men.

M. Venizelos, again Prime Minister and at the head of a parliamentary majority fresh from elections, urged the Allies to send troops to Salonika to enable Greece to enter the war according to her honourable obligations. As a military measure to aid Serbia directly, the landing at this juncture of allied forces at Salonika was absurd. The hostile armies concentrating on the

eastern and northern frontiers of Serbia were certain to overwhelm and overrun that country before any effective aid, other than Greek aid, could possibly arrive. As a political move to encourage and determine the action of Greece, the dispatch of allied troops to Salonika was justified. But the question arose: Where were the troops to come from? Obviously from the Dardanelles and only from the Dardanelles. A French and a British division, all that could be spared and all that could get to Salonika in time, were accordingly taken from Sir Ian Hamilton's hard-pressed army in the closing days of September.

The reader who has a true sense of the values in the problem will not be surprised to learn that this dispatch of troops from the Dardanelles produced the opposite effect to that intended or desired. King Constantine had been trained all his life as a soldier. He had studied very closely the strategic situation of his country and conceived himself to be an authority on the subject. The road to his heart was through some sound military plan, and this he was never offered by the Allies.

When he learned that the allied help was to take the form of withdrawing two divisions from the Dardanelles, he naturally concluded that that enterprise was about to be abandoned. He saw himself, if he entered the war, confronted after a short interval not only with the Bulgarians but with the main body of the Turkish Army now chained to the Gallipoli Peninsula. He read in the British and French action a plain confession of impending failure in the main operation whose progress during the whole year had dominated the war situation in the east. It proved impossible to remove these anxieties from the Royal mind, and added to his German sympathies they were decisive. "His Majesty," said Sir Francis Elliot [October 6], "was disturbed by the fact that troops had been brought from the Dardanelles to Salonika. He thought that it was the beginning of the abandonment of the expedition and would release the whole Turkish Army to reinforce the Bulgarians."

King Constantine Dismisses Venizelos.

While the troops were already on the way and the British Navy were netting the harbour of Salonika against submarines, King Constantine dismissed M. Venizelos, on whose invitation they had come. The Allies therefore found themselves confronted with a pro-German Greece determined to repudiate its treaty obligations to Serbia. Thus the object of the expedition to Salonika had entirely disappeared. But those powerful persons in France and England who had advocated it were determined to persevere. The miseries of Serbia fighting desperately against superior forces, the shame and sorrow of watching a small ally trampled down, combined with dislike and weariness of the Dardanelles to form a tide of opinion impossible to resist.

I continued to point to the Dardanelles as the master key to the problem, and a naval attempt to force the Straits as the sole chance of changing the action of Bulgaria and averting the destruction of Serbia. Even up to the last moment the arrival of a British Fleet in the Sea of Marmora might have transformed the situation. The Bulgarians, having mobilized against one side, might have marched against the other. Mr. Balfour, however, although perfectly ready to bear the supreme responsibility if Admiral de Robeck and the First Sea Lord, Sir Henry Jackson, had been willing to make the attempt, could not feel justified in overriding them or replacing them by others. It only remained, therefore, to await the catastrophe.

The Advice of the Experts.

The Cabinet found the hopelessness of the situation unendurable, and apparently the French Government was similarly distressed. A vehement wish to rush troops to the aid of Serbia manifested itself. It was in vain that the impossibility of their arriving before it was too late was explained. On Friday, October 6, after heated and confused discussions, the Cabinet decided to refer the tangled situation to

the considered judgment of the combined staffs of the Admiralty and the War Office. The great question—What to do? was accordingly remitted to the naval and military experts gathered together under the guidance of the Chief of the Imperial General Staff and the First Sea Lord.

Through the whole of Saturday and Sunday these officers considered and prepared their report, and on Monday, October 9, this remarkable document was circulated to Ministers. The General Staff, in loyal accord with General Headquarters in France and with almost all orthodox military opinion, recommended that everything should be concentrated on the prolongation of the Battle of Loos, from which they considered decisive results might be obtained. In this they were proved wrong by the events not only of 1915, but of 1916 and of 1917. Although the British Army continued its operations with the fullest support and to the utmost limit of its ammunition, not only were they unable to break the German line but a very large proportion of their initial gains were wrested from them by the German counter-attacks.

From a drawing by Christopher Clark.

FIGHTING IN THE STREETS OF LOOS.

The battle of Loos was remarkable in one respect. Here for the first time the men of Kitchener's Army were engaged in a major operation. Composed of the flower of the country's manhood, the new troops fought with desperate valour. But here, as later on the Somme, lives were squandered and men disabled for the sake of an advance that could have no real effect on the main issue.

If Sir Douglas Haig with the enormous expenditure of munitions and life which characterized the battles on the Somme in 1916 or at Paschendaele in 1917 was unable to achieve any decisive results, what chance had Sir John French with the scanty offensive resources of 1915? The best and most orthodox military opinion was at this time so far out of touch with reality, that the General Staff

From a drawing by S. Begg.

FIGHTING NEAR THE "TOWER BRIDGE."

The glorious but futile advance of September 25, 1915, now known as the Battle of Loos, resulted in a comparatively small gain at heavy cost. Once more the futility of direct assaults upon a well-armed and entrenched enemy was amply demonstrated. On the left of the above drawing is the famous "Tower Bridge" of Loos, while to the right is Hill 70.

still contemplated the irruption of a mass of cavalry through the German line. What the cavalry would have done if they had got through was not explained.

The Cabinet Compromises.

But passing from the general question of the offensive in France to the specific issues raised by the situation in the east, the General Staff of the Army and the Admiralty War Staff pronounced in no uncertain tones against the Salonika enterprise and in favour of a continuance of the operations at the Dardanelles. The advocates of Salonika had been those who had pressed most strongly for the remission of the disputed questions to the unbiased and undiluted judgment of the naval and military experts. They were completely indisposed to accept the pronouncement of the tribunal to which they had appealed.

When these matters came before the War Council (whose numbers had now been increased to include the prominent figures on both sides of the controversy) on the evening of October 9, it was evident that no agreement could be reached as between Salonika and the Dardanelles. On the other hand, it was common ground that large reinforcements should be sent to the eastern theatre as soon as possible. As these troop movements would necessarily take several weeks, and it could be plausibly argued that the situation would develop in the meanwhile in such a way as to make ultimate concord possible, it was finally settled that six divisions should be withdrawn from France and sent to Egypt, and that what should happen to them after that should be settled later.

The Prime Minister felt himself constrained to agree to this arrangement. He was, in my opinion, throughout unwavering in his intention to persevere at the Dardanelles, and he used every resource of patience and tact to guide and carry opinion in that direction and to secure the necessary decisions at the earliest possible moment. A more vigorous course would probably have broken up the Government. I was, and am, strongly of opinion that it would

have been much better to break up the Cabinet, and let one section or the other carry out their view in its integrity, than to preserve what was called "the national unity" at the expense of vital executive action. But after that there would still have been the difficulty with the French.

The French Decision.

The French Government had by this time made up their mind wholeheartedly in favour of Salonika. They declared their intention of sending General Sarrail's army thither instead of to the Dardanelles, and urged us to support them as strongly as possible. Another series of disputes therefore broke out in the Cabinet upon the proposal to divert to Salonika the troops now under orders for Egypt, and the consequent abandonment of any further great enterprise to open the Straits. Military authority was again appealed to; and the General Staff in a paper, every word of which was justified by subsequent events, showed that there was no possibility of saving the Serbians, and that the Salonika enterprise was a dangerous and futile dissipation and misdirection of forces.

Fortified by the unequivocal recommendation of all the military and naval authorities, the Cabinet refused to agree to the French proposals, and insisted upon the reinforcing British divisions being sent according to the agreement to Egypt, where they were to be fitted out with their semi-tropical equipment, etc.

On this General Joffre was sent by the French Government over to England. After his defeat in Champagne he was in no position to resist the strong tendencies of his Government, nor possibly particularly anxious to keep General Sarrail in Paris. He arrived, and in the absence of the Prime Minister, who was at this time temporarily incapacitated by illness, met the leading members of the Cabinet. I was excluded from this Conference, no doubt because it was known that I should certainly prove intractable. After the Conference was over the Cabinet was informed that General Joffre had pledged his military judgment in favour of the necessity and practicability of the Salonika expedition, and had threatened to resign the command of the French armies if the British did not effectively cooperate. In spite of the strenous resistance of the British General Staff, and in the flattest defiance of their advice, the Cabinet yielded to this outrageous threat.

The Final Offer of the British Government.

The final policy of the British Government, though erroneous in direction and too late in time, was not without its grandeur. On October 12 the following declaration was made both to Roumania and to Greece:—

"The only effective manner in which help can be given to Serbia is by the immediate declaration of war by Roumania and Greece against the Austro-Germans and Bulgaria. The British Government in that event would be prepared to sign forthwith a Military Convention with Roumania, whereby Great Britain will guarantee to bring into action in the Balkan theatre, not including the forces already in Gallipoli, an army of at least 200,000 men. If the French send a force as they contemplate doing, that force would be part of this total; but if not, the British Government would undertake to provide the whole number themselves.

"This force would include a number of our best and most seasoned divisions, and we shall maintain them in the field waging war on behalf of our Allies until the objective is accomplished. A steady flow of troops will commence as soon as transport is available and will be continuously maintained. We estimate that 150,000 men will be available by the end of November, and the total 200,000 will be reached by the end of the year.

"The Military Convention will state precisely the dates at which the different portions of the army will arrive. We are repeating this offer to Greece, and if Roumania is prepared to act immediately, we shall call upon Greece imperatively to fulfil her treaty obligations to Serbia."

Such a spirit manifested three months earlier would have prevented the disasters by whose imminence it had been evoked. Such an army applied in August or September, either to the Gallipoli Peninsula or to the Asiatic shore, would have overpowered the Turks already extended at their fullest strain, and transformed defeat into victory throughout the east. But now these immense offers, not arising from foresight but extorted only by the pressure of events, fell upon deaf ears. Neither Roumania nor Greece would move an inch.

In these throes Sir Edward Carson resigned because of the failure to rescue Serbia, and M. Delcassé because of the attempt.

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The Storm Bursts on Serbia.

On October 9 the storm of ruin burst upon the Balkans, and Mackensen, crossing the Danube with nine German and Austrian divisions, entered Belgrade from the north. Two days later the Bulgarians invaded Serbia from the east. This double and converging attack was overwhelming. Uskub fell on October 22, and Nish on November 2. In another month Monastir was captured, and by the middle of December the Serbian Army was destroyed or driven completely from Serbian soil.

The relentless severity of the Bulgarian pursuit exposed the retreating Serbian forces and population to the worst horrors of war and winter. Scores of thousands of defenceless people perished, and the whole country was ravaged and reduced to complete subjugation. Meanwhile, large Anglo-French forces began to accumulate at Salonika as helpless spectators of these events, the Allied Army on the Gallipoli Peninsula was left to rot, and the British Fleet at the Dardanelles remained motionless.

From the painting by C. W. Simpson. Copyright reserved for owners by Royal Academy Illustrated.

THE SERBIAN RETREAT INTO ALBANIA.

As described in the text, the day of October 9 broke stormily for Serbia. This nation of soldiers, so long enduring, was at last overwhelmed. Nothing that the Serbians could do availed to stay Mackensen's invading tide, and before the end of the year the Serbian Army was no more.

CHAPTER LIII

THE ABANDONMENT OF THE DARDANELLES

Consequences—Recall of Sir Ian Hamilton—General Monro's Report—Effect on Lord Kitchener—Admiral von Usedom's Report to the German Emperor—Plans of Commodore Keyes and Rear-Admiral Wemyss—Outline of the Keyes Plan—The New War Committee—Lord Kitchener's Mission—I Resign from the Government—Confusion and Difficulties of the Times—A General View.

THE events described in the last chapter led directly to the abandonment of the enterprise against the Dardanelles.

Consequences.

In the first place, the impending opening of through communications between Germany and Turkey seemed to offer to the Turks the prospect of large supplies of all kinds and particularly of heavy guns and ammunition. Our troops on the Peninsula, whose positions did not allow of any local withdrawal, were threatened with a very great increase in the hostile bombardment. Secondly, the Salonika expedition must become a serious rival to the Dardanelles, drawing upon the existing strength of a harassed army and intercepting and diverting reinforcements and supplies. Apprehensions of approaching failure, if not indeed of final disaster, were rife. Only the fear of a massacre on the Beaches and of the loss of a large proportion of the Army delayed for a time the evacuation of Gallipoli and the abandonment of the enterprise. As a first step, on October 11, Lord Kitchener telegraphed to Sir Ian Hamilton :—

"What is your estimate of the probable loss which would be entailed to our forces if the evacuation of the Gallipoli Peninsula was decided upon and carried out in the most careful manner?"[1] . . .

Sir Ian Hamilton, who had already declared evacuation to be "unthinkable," replied on the 12th that—

"It would not be wise to reckon on getting out of Gallipoli with less loss than that of half the total force, as well as guns which must be used to the last, stores, railway plant, horses. . . . We might be very lucky and lose considerably less than I have estimated."

Recall of Sir Ian Hamilton.

On October 14 it was decided to recall Sir Ian Hamilton and to send out in his place General Monro, an officer who had already commanded an army in France and was deeply imbued with western ideas. He belonged to that school whose supreme conception of Great War strategy was "killing Germans." Anything that killed Germans was right. Anything that did not kill Germans was useless, even if it made other people kill them, and kill more of them, or terminated their power to kill us. To such minds the capture of Constantinople was an idle trophy, and the destruction of Turkey as a military factor, or the rallying of the Balkan States to the Allies, mere politics, which every military man should hold in proper scorn.

The special outlook of General Monro was not known to the Cabinet. His instructions were moreover exclusively military. He was to express an opinion whether the Gallipoli Peninsula should be evacuated, or another attempt made to carry it; and on the number of troops that would be required (1) to carry the Peninsula, (2) to keep the Straits open, and (3) to

[1] *Gallipoli Diary*, p. 249.

take Constantinople.[1] No reference was made to any part which might be played by the Fleet in this essentially amphibious operation. Very large masses of troops were now moving from France to the eastern theatre, and the whole question of their employment was left open. In these circumstances General Monro's report was awaited with the utmost anxiety.

General Monro's Report.

There was however no need for suspense. General Monro was an officer of swift decision. He came, he saw, he capitulated. He reached the Dardanelles on October 28; and already on the 29th he and his staff were discussing nothing but evacuation. On the 30th he landed on the Peninsula.

Without going beyond the Beaches, he familiarized himself in the space of six hours with the conditions prevailing on the 15-mile front of Anzac, Suvla and Helles, and spoke a few discouraging words to the principal officers at each point. To the Divisional Commanders summoned to meet him at their respective Corps Headquarters, he put separately and in turn a question in the following sense: "On the supposition that you are going to get no more drafts can you maintain your position in spite of the arrival of strong reinforcements with heavy guns and limitless German ammunition?" He thus collected a number of dubious answers, armed with which he returned to Imbros. He never again set foot on the Peninsula during the tenure of his command. His Chief-of-the-Staff, also an enthusiast for evacuation, never visited it at all.

On October 31 General Monro despatched his telegram recommending the total evacuation of the Gallipoli Peninsula and the final abandonment of the campaign. According to his own statements he contemplated, in addition to the ruin of the whole enterprise, a loss of from thirty to forty per cent. of the army, i.e. about forty thousand officers and men. This he was prepared to accept. Two days later he left for Egypt, leaving the command of the Dardanelles Army temporarily in the hands of General Birdwood.

[1] General Sir C. C. Monro's Despatch, *London Gazette*.

Effect on Lord Kitchener.

General Monro's telegram of "Evacuation" fell like a thunderbolt upon Lord Kitchener; and for the moment and under the shock he rose in all the strength which he commanded when he represented the indomitable core of our national character.

Lord Kitchener to General Birdwood.

November 3, 1915.

"Very secret.

"You know the report sent in by Monro. I shall come out to you; am leaving to-morrow night. I have seen Captain Keyes, and I believe the Admiralty will agree to making naval attempt to force the passage of the Straits. We must do what we can to assist them, and I think as soon as our ships are in the Sea of Marmora we should seize the Bulair isthmus and hold it so as to supply the Navy if the Turks still hold out.

"Examine very carefully the best position for landing near the marsh at the head of the Gulf of Xeros, so that we could get a line across the isthmus, with ships at both sides. In order to find the troops for this undertaking we should have to reduce the numbers in the trenches to the lowest possible, and perhaps evacuate positions at Suvla. All the best fighting men that could be spared, including your boys from Anzac and every one I can sweep up in Egypt, might be concentrated at Mudros ready for this enterprise.

"There will probably be a change in the naval command, Wemyss being appointed in command to carry through the naval part of the work.

"As regards the military command, you would have the whole force, and should carefully select your commanders and troops. I would suggest Maude, Fanshawe, Marshall, Peyton, Godley, Cox, leaving others to hold the lines. Please work out plans for this, or alternative plans as you may think best. We must do it right this time.

"I absolutely refuse to sign orders for evacuation, which I think would be

the gravest disaster and would condemn a large percentage of our men to death or imprisonment.

"Monro will be appointed to the command of the Salonika force."

Here was the true Kitchener. Here in this flaming telegram — whether Bulair was the best place or not—was the Man the British Empire believed him to be, in whom millions set their faith — resolute, self-reliant, creative, lion-hearted.

Unhappily the next day :—

Lord Kitchener to General Birdwood.

November 4, 1915.

"I am coming as arranged. . . . The more I look at the problem the less I see my way through, so you had better work out very quietly and secretly any scheme for getting the troops off the peninsula."

* * * *

Admiral von Usedom's Report to the German Emperor.

We may now once again exercise our privilege of crossing to the enemy's lines and of learning how the situation was viewed by the responsible German authorities. On the same October 31 that General Monro dispatched his telegram of evacuation to Lord Kitchener, Admiral von Usedom who, it will be remembered, commanded the fortress of the Dardanelles and all the marine defences of the Straits, completed a despatch to the Emperor dealing with the events of the past month.

"The great attack," he wrote, "which we have been expecting on the land front has not taken place since the advance inaugurated by the new landing on August 7 north of the Ariburnu front was brought to a standstill. At the end of September reports of moves of troops and vehicles increased. Information from Salonika confirms that troops are being drawn thither from the Dardanelles front. I do not, however, consider it probable that the enemy will evacuate his position without hard fighting. In order to drive him out a very thorough artillery preparation is necessary, and for this the munitions on the spot or which can be brought up are insufficient."

He proceeded to dwell upon the dangerous manner in which the fortress defences of the Straits had been weakened through the repeated withdrawals of the mobile artillery, par-

Photo : Imperial War Museum.

GENERAL SIR IAN HAMILTON RECALLED.

On October 14, 1915, it was decided to recall Sir Ian Hamilton to London, in order that the Cabinet might have the benefit of his views on the situation. This photograph shows Sir Ian Hamilton taking leave of his staff on the morning of October 17, shortly before his departure for England.

ticularly the howitzers, on which his whole system depended. In addition to the forty-nine howitzers and mobile guns with their supplies of ammunition withdrawn in May and June, he had during August and September been forced to cede another twenty-one of his most valuable howitzers and mobile guns. The whole of the vital intermediate Defences of the forts contained at this time only twenty mobile howitzers and mortars.

* * *

Plans of Commodore Keyes and Rear-Admiral Wemyss.

Meanwhile Commodore Keyes, Chief of the Staff to Admiral de Robeck, could endure the position at the Dardanelles no longer. He had been throughout convinced that the Fleet could at any time with proper preparation force the Dardanelles and enter the Marmora in sufficient strength. During the summer detailed plans for this operation were prepared under his direction by the Naval Staff. These plans were now completed, and Commodore Keyes declared himself confident of their success. In this opinion he was most strongly supported by Rear-Admiral Wemyss.

Photo: Vandyk.

GENERAL SIR CHARLES MONRO.

Sir Charles Monro entered the Army in 1879, and on the outbreak of the Great War was appointed to the command of the 2nd Division with which he proceeded to France. In 1915 he commanded in succession the Ist Corps and later the Third Army. In October, 1915, it was decided that he should go out to the Dardanelles in order that he might report upon the situation as he viewed it. General Monro accordingly proceeded thither and decided for evacuation.

This officer was actually senior to Admiral de Robeck, but in circumstances which have already been explained [1] he had accepted the position of Second-in-Command upon the eve of the action of March 18. The qualities of character and judgment which he displayed during the war were destined to raise him from a Rear-Admiral to the position of First Sea Lord. In this supreme capacity he was eventually to sustain the burden of the last fourteen months of the struggle. His opinion therefore is retrospectively invested with very high authority.

The joint representations of the Chief of Staff and of his Second-in-Command were not, however, acceptable to Admiral de Robeck. Commodore Keyes thereupon asked to be relieved of his appointment in order that he might return home and lay his plans before the Board of Admiralty. Admiral de Robeck, with a magnanimous gesture, asked him to retain his position and accorded him leave of absence, full

[1] See p. 611.

liberty and "a fair field" to state his case, making it clear, however, that he could not himself in any circumstances become responsible for a further naval attempt. Commodore Keyes therefore repaired to London forthwith, where he arrived on October 28.

Outline of the Keyes Plan.

The Keyes plan was remarkable for its audacity. It discarded all the gradual methods around which it had alone been possible hitherto to rally naval opinion. The Fleet would be divided into four squadrons, three of which were to take part in the attack, while the fourth provided the support for the Army. The Second Squadron comprised about eight old battleships and cruisers, four very old battleships acting as supply ships, as many of the dummy battleships as possible, and a number of merchantmen carrying coal and ammunition. All these vessels were to be fitted with mine-bumpers.

Preceded by four of the best sweepers and accompanied by eight destroyers and two scouts, this Second Squadron was to enter the Straits shortly before dawn, keeping below the illuminated area until dawn was about to break, when it would proceed to steam through the Narrows at its utmost speed. Commodore Keyes proposed to take command of this squadron himself. It was his firm conviction that with the improved sweepers and the mine-bumpers, and aided by smoke screens, darkness and surprise, certainly more than half of this squadron would arrive above Nagara. The battleships which survived were immediately to attack the forts of the Narrows from their rear, which would have been completely exposed.

Meanwhile at dawn the First Squadron, composed of the *Lord Nelson, Agamemnon, Exmouth,* two *King Edwards,* four French ships, the *Glory* and the *Canopus,* accompanied by eight sloops and ten destroyers for sweeping, would simultaneously attack the forts at the Narrows from below the Kephez minefield. The Third Squadron, consisting of two Monitors, the *Swiftsure,* and five cruisers or light cruisers, was to cover the army and co-operate from across the Peninsula in the attack upon the forts at the Narrows. The bombardment of the forts at the Narrows by all three squadrons, and the sweeping of the minefields already deranged by the passage of the Second Squadron, were to be pursued continuously without slackening for a moment.

An elaborate memorandum had been prepared by the staff, regulating every phase of this main attack which might well have been continued for two or even three days if necessary before the final advance of the First Squadron through the Narrows was ordered. In short, the Keyes plan was in principle the old plan of pinning down the forts in close and continuous action while the minefields were swept, but in addition it was to be preceded by a furious surprise rush of the oldest vessels to dislocate the defence, to sweep and break up the minefields and secure positions whence the forts could be taken in reverse.

"The action recommended (in the staff memorandum)," wrote Commodore Keyes, "taken in conjunction with the preliminary rush and determined military offensive, generally represents the views of a number of experienced officers who strongly advocate a naval attack on the Straits and are confident of success. If success is achieved, the Turkish Army in Gallipoli will be entirely dependent on the Bulair Isthmus for supplies. This line of communication can be harassed day and night." Finally the plan comprised detailed arrangements for maintaining the successful ships in the Marmora while they were operating against the Turkish communications.

* * * *

The New War Committee.

On November 2 the Prime Minister reconstituted the War Council or Dardanelles Committee as it had hitherto been styled. In its new form it was called the "War Committee" and was limited to the Prime Minister, Mr. Balfour, Lord Kitchener, Sir Edward Grey and Mr. Lloyd George. Mr. Bonar Law was added ten days later under

Conservative pressure. I was excluded. It was announced that this Committee would be responsible to the Cabinet for the whole direction of the war.

On November 3 the new Committee met to consider the question of evacuating the Dardanelles. Lord Kitchener's views have been fully exposed in his telegram to General Birdwood of that day. He had previously telegraphed to General Monro asking whether his opinions were shared by the Corps Commanders on the Peninsula. He had been answered that General Byng favoured evacuation and considered that Suvla could be evacuated without much loss, provided the attempt were made before German reinforcements arrived; that General Davies, commanding at Helles, concurred with General Monro; but that General Birdwood at Anzac was opposed to evacuation. General Maxwell, commanding in Egypt, had also independently telegraphed urging that a further effort should be made to hold on. Thus the military opinions were divided.

The Committee had also before them the plans of Commodore Keyes, endorsed by Admiral Wemyss, in regard to which the Admiralty War Staff had pronounced no decided opinion. Keyes was still only a Captain with the rank of Commodore. He was known as a daring and gifted officer, but he had no record of high command behind him, and he did not carry the authority necessary to override Admiral de Robeck's negative view. Could he at this juncture, with the fame of the leader of the Dover patrol, have laid upon the Council Table the credentials of Zeebrugge, the history of the Great War might have been much curtailed.

Lord Kitchener's Mission.

In the circumstances which existed the new War Committee found no difficulty in deciding to postpone the evil day of decision. Lord Kitchener proceeded to the Dardanelles to survey the situation on the spot and make further recommendations. The Secretary of State for War left London on November 4, apparently in great sympathy with Commodore Keyes's plan. He spoke on his way through Paris in an exceedingly resolute manner, and directed Commodore Keyes to explain the scheme to the French Minister of Marine, now Admiral Lacaze, and then follow him with all speed. Admiral Lacaze was wholly favourable to the plan, and immediately promised a reinforcement of six old French battleships to execute it.

Lord Kitchener arrived at the Dardanelles on November 9. His personal inspection of the troops and the defences convinced him that the troops could hold their positions unless confronted with very heavy German reinforcements of which there was no immediate prospect. His conferences with Admiral de Robeck led him however, in the absence of Commodore Keyes, to discard the idea of a renewed naval attempt. Instead he devised a plan for a new landing at Ayas in the Gulf of Alexandretta, with the double object of barring the path of a Turkish invasion of Egypt and of covering the effects of an impending withdrawal from Gallipoli.

This plan did not commend itself either to the Admiralty or to the War Committee. With Salonika as well as the Dardanelles on their hands, they were naturally reluctant to commit themselves to another new and entirely separate enterprise which could at the best only achieve subsidiary objects. They therefore informed Lord Kitchener of their dissent from his views and announced that they had decided that the final decision about Gallipoli was to be relegated to a Conference to be held in Paris a few days later.

* * * *

I Resign from the Government.

In accepting an office in the new Government after leaving the Admiralty at the end of May, I had been actuated by the feeling that it was my duty to sustain the Dardanelles enterprise to the best of my ability, and by the hope that with a seat on the War Council I should be able to do so. It was on this condition alone that I had found it possible to occupy a sinecure office. That condition had now disappeared. I was out

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

LORD KITCHENER AT HELLES.

When Lord Kitchener received General Monro's report advising immediate evacuation he was thunderstruck. He proceeded in person to the Dardanelles, and is seen here in consultation with General Birdwood, General Davies and Colonel Watson, Commandant of the Advanced Base.

of harmony with the views which were prevailing and to which the Prime Minister had at last submitted. I was also distressed at the methods of indecision arising from conflicting opinions which at this time pervaded and paralysed the conduct of the war. The rejection of the plans of Commodore Keyes and Admiral Wemyss filled me with despair. I was convinced that the evacuation of Gallipoli was intended and must follow as a consequence of what had taken place.

Awful as were the risks of this decision, it was inevitable unless further efforts on a great scale were to be made by sea or land. Even evacuation was better than leaving the army to moulder piecemeal without support or purpose. If a British Cabinet or Admiralty were unable to face the responsibility of a naval attempt, there was still time for further military efforts.

The important new armies gathering in the Near East, in Egypt and at Salonika, could have been landed at Besika Bay to advance along the Asiatic shore, or alternatively at some point in the Gulf of Xeros to cut the Isthmus of Bulair. Both these operations would have required a large number of additional small vessels — trawlers, lighters, beetles, etc.—but either could have been carried out before the position of the Allied Army holding the Gallipoli Peninsula became untenable through the arrival of great supplies of German artillery and ammunition. In neither case had the Turks sufficient reserves available to meet the new invasion. In both cases victory would have carried with it the destruction or capture of the whole Turkish Army of twenty divisions now concentrated on the Gallipoli Peninsula and the consequent liberation as a new factor of our own fourteen divisions. Bulgaria had joined our enemies; Serbia was overrun. But Greece and Roumania could still have been gained; Constantinople could still have been taken; communications could still have been reopened with Russia; and Turkey would have been driven out of Europe, if not indeed altogether out of the war.

But it would have been useless to advocate such a policy in the teeth of the opinions which were now prevailing, even had I been accorded a seat on the War Committee. It was better that other schemes of strategic and political thought now dominant should have their chance and be applied in their integrity by those who believed in them. I knew too much and felt too keenly to be able to accept Cabinet responsi-

bility for what I believed to be a wholly erroneous conception of war. I therefore in the middle of November sought permission to retire from the Government.

It was impossible at that time to discuss in Parliament any of the grave and tormenting controversies which these pages expose. I had nothing but the friendliest personal feelings towards my colleagues and the Prime Minister, and I would not speak a word which might add to their difficulties or those of the State. I was content to base myself upon a desire to relinquish a well-paid sinecure office which I could not bear longer to hold at this sad juncture in our affairs.

Confusion and Difficulties of the Times.

I have tried to show what I believe to be the interplay of forces and sequence of events in this tragedy. Masses of documents can be produced which illustrate and elaborate all the phases of the story, and there are many minor episodes which it would have been only confusing to include. But from what has been written, the appalling difficulties and cruel embarrassments of those who, whatever their views, were endeavouring loyally and earnestly to discharge their great responsibilities can be readily understood.

I have recorded my counsels at the time. The future was then unknown. No one possessed plenary power. The experts were frequently wrong. The politicians were frequently right. The wishes of foreign Governments, themselves convulsed internally by difficulties the counterpart of our own, were constantly thrusting themselves athwart our policy. Without the title deeds of positive achievement no one had the power to give clear brutal orders which would command unquestioning respect. Power was widely disseminated among the many important personages who in this period

Photo: Central News.

CLOSE TO THE TURKISH LINES.

Lord Kitchener did not confine his tour of inspection to the beaches of Gallipoli. He visited in turn the various sectors and studied the Turkish positions from such points of vantage as were available. In this photograph Lord Kitchener (*second from the right*) is observing the Turkish lines from a first-line trench at Anzac.

formed the governing instrument. Knowledge was very unequally shared. Innumerable arguments of a partial character could be quoted on every side of all these complicated questions. The situation itself was in constant and violent movement. We never at any time regained the initiative; we were always compelled to adapt ourselves to events. We could never overtake or forestall them. All the time, clear and simple solutions existed which would speedily have produced the precious element of victory.

A General View.

I may perhaps close this chapter by reprinting some words of general import which I used in explaining my resignation to the House of Commons :—

There is no reason to be discouraged about the progress of the war. We are passing through a bad time now and it will probably be worse before it is better, but that it will be better, if we only endure and persevere, I have no doubt whatever. The old wars were decided by their episodes rather than by their tendencies. In this war the tendencies are far more important than the episodes. Without winning any sensational victories we may win this war. We may win it even during a continuance of extremely disappointing and vexatious events. It is not necessary for us in order to win the war to push the German lines back over all the territory they have absorbed, or to pierce them. While the German lines extend far beyond her frontiers, and while her flag flies over conquered capitals and subjugated provinces, while all the appearances of military success attend her arms, Germany may be defeated more fatally in the second or third year of the war than if the Allied Armies had entered Berlin in the first.

. . . It is, no doubt, disconcerting for us to observe that the Government of a State like Bulgaria are convinced on an impartial survey of the chances that victory will rest with the Central Powers. All the small States are hypnotized by German military pomp and precision. They see the glitter, the episode, but they do not see or realize the capacity of the ancient and mighty nations, against whom Germany is warring, to endure adversity, to put up with disappointments and mismanagement, to recreate and renew their strength, and to pass on with boundless obstinacy through boundless sufferings to the achievement of their cause.

Photo : Copyright.

LANDING A HEAVY GUN AT HELLES.

The difficulties experienced in landing a heavy piece of artillery at Cape Helles are admirably conveyed by this photograph. A long column of men from the Royal Navy and the Royal Naval Division are no more than sufficient to haul the gun through the yielding sands of the shore.

CHAPTER LIV

THE CONSEQUENCES OF 1915

A Reflection—Final Stages of Gallipoli—Admiral Wemyss's Effort—Straits of the Turks—Final Decision to Evacuate—Admiral Wemyss's Telegram of December 8—The Government Inflexible—Successful Execution of the Evacuation—Consequences—The Revival of Turkey—Russia—The Waning Prestige of Lord Kitchener—Sir William Robertson—A Chain of Missed Chances—The War of Exhaustion.

THE closing scenes at the Dardanelles proceeded while I was serving with the 2nd Battalion of the Grenadier Guards near Laventie. I was not without information on the course of affairs from my friends both in the Cabinet and at General Headquarters. It was a comfort to be with these fine troops at such a time, to study their methods, unsurpassed in the army, of discipline and trench warfare, and to share from day to day their life under the hard conditions of the winter and the fire of the enemy. The kindness with which I was received during my period of instruction with the Guards Division will ever be gratefully remembered by me.

A Reflection.

As in the shades of a November evening, I for the first time led a platoon of Grenadiers across the sopping fields which gave access to our trenches, while here and there the bright flashes of the guns or the occasional whistle of a random bullet accompanied our path, the conviction came into my mind with absolute assurance that the simple soldiers and their regimental officers, armed with their cause, would by their virtues in the end retrieve the mistakes and ignorances of Staffs and Cabinets, of Admirals, Generals and politicians—including, no doubt, many of my own. But, alas, at what a needless cost! To how many slaughters, through what endless months of fortitude and privation would these men, themselves already the survivors of many a bloody day, be made to plod before victory was won!

* * * *

Final Stages of Gallipoli.

On November 22, Lord Kitchener, his Ayas Bay project being vetoed, consented to the evacuation of Suvla and Anzac. He still hoped to save Helles, the retention of which was strongly advocated by Admiral de Robeck. The War Committee, however, decided that all three lodgments should be abandoned. With this decision Admiral de Robeck expressed himself in disaccord. He deprecated the evacuation of Suvla and Anzac, and when asked specifically on November 25 if he concurred in the evacuation of Helles, he observed bluntly that "he could not understand it." The situation cannot, however, be disentangled from his attitude towards the use of the Fleet. His health was now temporarily impaired by his long spell of hard work. He started immediately for home on a period of leave.

Admiral Wemyss's Effort.

The command now devolved upon Admiral Wemyss. The new Naval Commander-in-Chief, undeterred by past events, bent himself to a last effort to retrieve the situation. In a series of telegrams, he emphasized the dangers of a winter evacuation. He dwelt upon its difficulties; he endorsed the estimate of General Monro that 30 per cent. of the force would be lost in evacuation; he urged that one more effort should

be made to convert defeat into victory. In a spirit which cannot be censured in the Royal Navy, he asserted that the Fleet would do its part, and that even if the Army could not co-operate, he would carry out the Keyes plan and force the Dardanelles by naval power alone.

These stalwart counsels threw everything again into the melting pot. The Cabinet revolted against the decision of their new War Committee. It was resolved that no decision could be taken without a further conference with the French, and a meeting of the new Allied Standing Council was fixed for December 5 at Calais. Lord Kitchener again took heart. In common with the British General Staff he was strongly opposed to the whole Salonica expedition. On December 2 he telegraphed to General Monro :—

Private and Secret.

The Cabinet has been considering the Gallipoli situation all day. Owing to the political consequences, there is a strong feeling against evacuation, even of a partial character. It is the general opinion we should retain Cape Helles.

If the Salonica troops are placed at your disposal up to four divisions for an offensive operation to improve the position at Suvla, could such operations be carried out in time with a view to making Suvla retainable by obtaining higher position and greater depth? The Navy will also take the offensive in co-operation.

* * *

Straits of the Turks.

Meanwhile the activities of the British submarines in the Marmora had almost entirely severed the sea communications of the Turkish Army, and were also impeding their supply by the roads along the Marmora shore. To meet this peril, which had been approaching plainly, steadily and rapidly during the last two or three months, the German Staff had built a new branch railway from the main Turkish system to Kavak at the head of the Gulf of Xeros. This had

Photo : Elliott & Fry.

ADMIRAL LORD WESTER WEMYSS.

Admiral R. E. Wemyss, as he then was, commanded the base at Mudros during the greater period of the Dardanelles campaign. Attention has already been drawn in the text (p. 611) to the public spirit displayed by this officer when, on the illness of Admiral Carden, he at once agreed to serve under Admiral de Robeck, although senior to him in substantive rank. When, in the closing months of 1915, official opinion in England was steadily hardening against the great adventure at the Dardanelles, Admiral Wemyss declared himself prepared to force the Straits. Had the permission he sought been granted to him it can hardly be doubted that this resolute leader would have been successful in brushing aside the few remaining obstacles which at this stage were all that the Turks could strew in his path.

been finished in the nick of time, and as the sea transport failed, it became the sole line of supply, relief or reinforcement for the twenty Turkish divisions on the Peninsula. From the new rail head at Kavak all transport was by bullock wagon or camel along roads across the Bulair Isthmus which were frequently disturbed by the fire of the Fleet. On December 2, Admiral Wemyss succeeded in destroying the three central spans of the Kavak Bridge by fire from the *Agamemnon, Endymion,* and a Monitor. The road was also so badly broken by the bombardment that wheeled traffic was completely interrupted.

The Turkish 5th Army was now in serious straits. The British Intelligence reported growing demoralization of the enemy through losses, disease, stringency of supplies, the severe weather, and the increasingly searching character of the naval fire. We know now that these reports were correct. Food, clothes, boots, ammunition were frightfully scarce. The condition of the Turkish soldiers, often bare-footed, ragged, hungry, clinging to their trenches week after week, excited at this time the sympathy as well as the alarm of their German masters. Count Metternich, then German Ambassador at Constantinople, visited the Turkish lines on the Peninsula in December in company with Liman von Sanders. "If you had only known," he said, discussing these events after the war, "what the state of the Turkish Army was, it would have gone hard with us." It was not, however, knowledge that was lacking, but the collective will-power to turn it to account.

Photo : Imperial War Museum.

ANTI-AIRCRAFT MACHINE GUN.

A photograph taken in the French sector at Helles showing an anti-aircraft machine gun team about to open fire on an approaching Turkish aeroplane. Troops in the rear areas at Helles suffered not a little from the activities of hostile planes spotting for their gunners. In consequence of this, every possible step was taken to harass enemy planes and to prevent their observers from obtaining information concerning movements or concentrations of troops.

Final Decision to Evacuate.

Admiral Wemyss and his staff were now confident that they had the power, even without forcing the Straits, not only to prevent the arrival of German artillery reinforcements on a large scale, but also gravely to compromise the existence of the whole Turkish Army on the Gallipoli Peninsula. Thus on the spot hope flared up again. It was at this moment, when for the first

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

GULLY RAVINE.

One of the most prominent features of the Helles landscape, Gully Ravine was, as its name infers, a deep nullah or watercourse, the bed of which in the summer was dry and sandy. It ran in a north-easterly direction towards Krithia, passing to the westward of that much-coveted village. Here the Indian Brigade and the 29th Division were frequently in action, particularly on June 4 and 28, 1915. Both the British and Turkish lines ran astride of the ravine some distance south of Krithia.

time a strong and competent naval command declared itself positive of success, that the improvident decision to evacuate was finally taken. On December 8 the Joint Staff Conference sitting at the French General Headquarters declared unanimously for the immediate organization of the defence of Salonica and for the immediate evacuation of Gallipoli. From this moment the perplexities of the British Government came to an end. Henceforward they remained steadfast in pusillanimous resolve.

Admiral Wemyss's Telegram of December 8.

Admiral Wemyss, however, with Keyes at his side, did not readily yield; and the struggle of these two sailors against the now marshalled force of the Cabinet, the War Committee, the Joint Anglo-French Conference, the Admiralty and the War Office, constitutes an episode on which perhaps in future years British naval historians will be glad to dwell. His telegram of December 8 at least must in justice to the Royal Navy be quoted here:—

"The navy is prepared to force the Straits and control them for an indefinite period, cutting off all Turkish supplies which now find their way to the Peninsula either by sea from the Marmora or across the Dardanelles from Asiatic to European shore. The only line of communications left would be the road along the Isthmus of Bulair, which can be controlled almost entirely from the Sea of Marmora and the Gulf of Xeros. What is offered the Army, therefore, is the practical, complete severance of all Turkish lines of communication, accompanied by the destruction of the large supply depots on the shore of the Dardanelles.

"In the first instance I strongly advocated that the naval attack should synchronize with an army offensive, and if the Army will be prepared to attack in the event of a favourable opportunity presenting itself, nothing more need be required of them. The Navy here is prepared to undertake this operation with every assurance of success. If the units as described in your letter of November 24 can be provided, these hopes of success are greatly increased, and the possible losses greatly diminished.

"The unanimous military opinion referred to in Admiralty telegram

No. 422 has, I feel certain, been greatly influenced, and naturally so, by the military appreciations of Sir Charles Monro. These I have not seen, but their purport I have gathered in course of conversations. The Corps Commanders, I know, view the evacuation with the greatest misgiving. The forcing of the Dardanelles, as outlined in my telegrams, has never been put before them, and I am convinced that, after considering the certain results which would follow a naval success, they would favour an attack on the lines indicated, especially in view of the undoubted low morale of the Turkish Peninsular army, of which we have ample evidence.

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"The very extensive German propaganda being pursued all over the Near East, accompanied by the expenditure of vast sums of money, is not, I feel convinced, being undertaken merely as a side issue to the European war.

"A position of stalemate on both fronts of the principal theatres of war appears the natural outcome of present situation. This opinion is freely expressed in the higher military circles in Greece, and would therefore appear to be fostered by the Germans—a significant point.

"By surrendering our position here, when within sight of victory, we are aiding enemy to obtain markets the possession of which may enable her to outlast the Allies in the war of exhaustion now commencing.

"A successful attack would once and for all disperse those clouds of doubt, a large amount of shipping would be released, and the question of Greece and Egypt settled.

"I do not know what has been

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

GULLY RAVINE AS WINTER SET IN.

To the many discomforts of the troops on the Peninsula the coming of winter and the storms of November, 1915, added cold, wet and mud. This photograph is evidence of the change wrought upon the erstwhile sandy bottom of Gully Ravine. Where the going had been dusty and dry, horse transport is now seen to be ploughing its way through deep mud.

decided about Constantinople, but if the Turks could be told that we were in the Marmora to prevent its occupation by the Germans, such a course would inevitably lead to disruption, and therefore weakness amongst them.

"I fear the effect on the Navy would be bad.

"Although no word of attack has passed my lips except to my immediate staff and admirals, I feel sure that every officer and man would feel that the campaign had been abandoned without sufficient use having been made of our greatest force, viz. the Navy.

"The position is so critical that there is no time for standing on ceremony, and I suggest that General Birdwood, the officer who would now have to carry out the attack or evacuation which is now ordered, be asked for his appreciation.

"The logical conclusion, therefore, is the choice of evacuation or forcing the Straits. I consider the former disastrous tactically and strategically, and the latter feasible, and, so long as troops remain at Anzac, decisive.

"I am convinced that the time is ripe for a vigorous offensive, and I am confident of success."

The Government Inflexible.

On August 18 the Admiralty had telegraphed to Admiral de Robeck authorizing and implicitly urging him to use the old battleships of the Fleet to force the Dardanelles, and Admiral de Robeck had declined. Now the conditions were reversed. On December 10 the same Board of Admiralty replied that they were not prepared to authorize the attempt by the Navy single-handed to force the Narrows. This sombre veto was final.

The risks that men are prepared to run in relation to circumstances present some of the strangest manifestations of psychology. One tithe of the hardihood they display to escape disaster, would often certainly achieve success. Contrast, for instance, the alternative hazards now presented to the British Government and Admiralty: on the one hand, the chance, even the probability according to all expert opinion, of losing 40,000 men in an evacuation, which if successful could only result in the total loss of the campaign; on the other, the chance of losing a squadron of old ships, and a small number of men in an operation which if successful would carry the campaign at a stroke from disaster to triumph. Yet we see Cabinet and Admiralty able to face the first alternative, and shrink from the second. While time is young, while prospects are favourable, while prizes inestimable may be gained, caution, hesitancy, half measures rule and fetter action. The grim afternoon of adverse struggle alone brings the hour of desperate resolve. The hopeful positive is rejected while all may be gained; the awful negative is embraced when nought but escape remains in view; and the energy and conviction which might have commanded victory are lavished upon the mere processes of flight.

The determination of the British Government to give in at all costs was now inflexible. The orders for the evacuation of Suvla and Anzac were reiterated by the Admiralty. On December 12, Admiral Wemyss bowed to those orders "with the greatest regret and misgiving." The plan for the evacuation, upon which a month's careful labour had been expended, was now completed, and the Admiral fixed the night of December 19 or 20 as the date of the operation.

Hope died hard. In ordering the evacuation of Suvla and Anzac the Government had consented to the retention for the time being of Helles which, while it was held, kept open the possibility of a renewed naval attack. In order to make Helles secure, the Admiral, in full accord with General Davies, commanding at Helles, elaborated plans for a combined attack by the Fleet and Army upon Achi Baba. The control and direction of the naval fire from the Monitors and the bulged "Edgars" had now been brought to a very high degree of efficiency. "Co-operation in an attack," wrote General Davies, "has now become a practical reality." Both the naval and military Commanders on the spot were therefore in complete agreement.

It is not necessary to pronounce upon the prospects of such an operation, for at this moment General Monro returned from Salonica where after his one day's visit to the Peninsula and his sojourn in Egypt he had been residing. Already on December 1 he had forbidden General Birdwood and the Corps Commanders to confer with the Admiral without his permission. On the 10th he peremptorily forbade General Birdwood to discuss any military matter with the Admiral. On the 14th he telegraphed home dissociating himself from the Admiral's views and protesting against any expression of opinion by Admiral Wemyss upon military matters. He agreed, however, with the naval and local military view that Helles could not be held indefinitely without Achi Baba. Thus at last, since the capture of Achi Baba was deemed impossible, the decision was reached for the total evacuation of the Peninsula.

* * * *

Successful Execution of the Evacuation.

It was with melancholy but intense relief that I learned in France of the successful and bloodless execution of this critical operation which was accomplished on the night of December 19. The utmost credit belongs to the naval and military officers who perfected in exact detail the arrangements, and to the Admirals and Generals by whom they were so successfully carried out. The weather, on which all depended, was favourable for exactly the vital forty-eight hours, and the Turks were utterly unsuspecting. Indeed, when dawn broke on empty trenches and famous positions, bought at so terrible a cost, now silent as the graves with which they were surrounded, the haggard Turkish soldiers and their undaunted chiefs could hardly believe their eyes. Their position, and that of their country whose capital they had defended with soldierly tenacity, were now translated at a stroke from extreme jeopardy into renewed and resuscitated power.

Conviction, determination and the will to win, steadfastly maintained by their High Command, had brought victory to the defence in spite of their inferiority in numbers and in resources of all kinds and of the inherent strategic perils of their position. The lack of these qualities on our side at the summit of power had defrauded the attackers of the reward, pregnant in its consequences to the whole world, to which their overwhelming potential strength and resources, their actual number and apparatus, their daring, their devotion and their fearful sacrifices had given them the right.

The evacuation of Helles was performed with equal skill and with equal good fortune on January 8, and the story of the Dardanelles came finally to an end. This consummation was acclaimed by the shallow and the uninstructed as if it had been a victory.

* * * *

Consequences.

It is necessary however not only to relate the immediate sequel, but to outline the vast consequences which flowed from these events.

The campaign of the Dardanelles had been starved and crippled at every stage by the continued opposition of the French and British High Commands in France to the withdrawal of troops and munitions from the main theatre of the war. The abandonment of the Dardanelles led to the diversion of the Allied military forces on a scale far larger than its most ardent advocates had ever contemplated. Serbia had been destroyed; Bulgaria had joined our enemies; Roumania and Greece lay frozen in a terrorized neutrality. But still, as long as the British flag flew on the Peninsula and the British Fleet lay off the Straits, the main power of Turkey was gripped and paralysed. The evacuation set free twenty Turkish divisions on the Peninsula, and Turkey henceforth was able to form a common front with the Bulgarians in Thrace, to attack Russia, to aid Austria, to overawe Roumania. Turkey was also placed in a position simultaneously to threaten Egypt and to reinforce Mesopotamia.

PREPARING FOR THE EVACUATION: A SC

The plans for the evacuation at Suvla Bay and Anzac were drawn up with the greatest po war material was left to lull any suspicions too empty beaches might have aroused. The attack upon the Turks, whom they regarded as beaten men. "I hope," said one of the marchi

The thirteen evacuated British divisions,[1] having been rested and refitted, were required to guard against the last two of these new dangers. The whole of the new army sent by France and Britain from the French theatre, amounting to seven additional divisions, was assigned to the defence of Salonica. Apart from the Anzacs, scarcely any of these twenty divisions of Allied troops ever fought against the Germans during the rest of the war.

Scarcely one came into any direct contact with any enemy for nearly six months, and during the same period thirteen out of the twenty liberated Turkish divisions were added to the hostile strength in other theatres. Eleven went to the Caucasus and two to Galicia, in both cases adding to the burden which Russia had to bear. Thus the first fruits of the evacuation of Gallipoli may be variously computed at a total loss of strength to the Allies of from thirty to forty divisions, half the army of a first-class power. It was evident that a very grave prolongation of the war must arise from this cause alone.

[1] The French Corps had already gone.

The Revival of Turkey.

From the moment when the grip on the heart of the Turkish Empire was relaxed, and breathing space was given, its widespread limbs under German stimulation regained and developed their power.

The three campaigns which had either begun or were imminent from Salonica, from Egypt, or in Mesopotamia, all grew rapidly into very great undertakings, and all continued until the last day of the war to make enormous drains upon the British resources and, to a lesser degree, upon those of France.

* * * *

Russia.

There ended with the Dardanelles all hope of forming direct and continuous contact with Russia. A railway 1,200 miles long might be built to Murmansk; Vladivostock might continue to pass

Photo: Imperial War Museum

AT "A" WEST BEACH, SUVLA BAY.

care and precision. Guns and stores of every kind were collected and evacuated, while enough went about their duties as usual, and at Anzac there were some who would have welcomed another General Birdwood on the last morning, as he pointed to a cemetery, "I hope *they* won't hear us the beach."

supplies across a distance of 4,000 miles; but the intimate co-operation in men and munitions, the vast exportation of South Russian wheat, the expansion of a vitalizing trade, which could alone spring from the opening of the Black Sea, was for ever denied us.

The abandonment of Gallipoli dispelled the Russian dream. In her darkest hours, under the flail of Ludendorff, driven out of Poland, driven out of Galicia, her armies enduring disaster and facing death often without arms, the cost of living rising continually throughout her vast, secluded Empire, Russia had cheered herself by dwelling on the great prize of Constantinople. A profound chill spread through all ranks of the Russian people, and with it came suspicion no less deep-seated. England had not really tried to force the Straits. From the moment when she had conceded the Russian claim to Constantinople, she had not been single-hearted, she had lost her interest in the enterprise. Her infirm action and divided counsels arose from secret motives hidden in the bosom of the State. And this while Russia was pouring out her blood as no race had ever done since men waged war.

Such were the whispers which, winged by skilful German propaganda, spread far and wide through the Czar's dominions, and in their wake every subversive influence gained in power. Lastly, the now inevitable prolongation of the struggle was destined to prove fatal to Russia. In the war of exhaustion to which we were finally condemned, which was indeed extolled as the last revelation of military wisdom, Russia was to be the first to fall, and in her fall to open upon herself a tide of ruin in which perhaps a score of millions of human beings have been engulfed. The consequences of these events abide with us to-day. They will darken the world for our children's children.

* * * *

The Waning Prestige of Lord Kitchener.

The failure of the Dardanelles Expedition was fatal to Lord Kitchener. During the whole of 1915 he had been in sole and plenary charge of the British

military operations, and until November on every important point his will had been obeyed. The new Cabinet, like the leading members of the old, had now in their turn lost confidence in his war direction. The conduct of the Gallipoli campaign showed only too plainly the limitations of this great figure at this period of his life and in this tremendous situation both as an organiser and a man of action. His advocacy of the offensive in France which had failed so conspicuously at Loos and in Champagne was upon record. Under the agony of the Gallipoli evacuation his will power had plainly crumpled, and the long series of contradictory resolves which had marked his treatment of this terrible question was obvious to all who knew the facts.

Already, in November, had come direct rebuff. His plan for a fresh landing in the Gulf of Alexandretta, though devised by him in the actual theatre of operations, had been decisively vetoed by the new War Committee of the Cabinet and by the Allies in conference. In a series of telegrams the inclination of which could scarcely be obscure, he was encouraged to transform his definite mission at the Dardanelles into a general and extensive tour of inspection in the East. His prompt return to London showed that he was not himself unaware of the change in his position.

The disposition of the British forces in the east which he made after the evacuation of Suvla and Anzac was certainly not such as to retrieve a waning prestige. It was natural that Egypt should loom disproportionately large in his mind. Almost his whole life had been spent and his fame won there. He now saw this beloved country menaced, as he believed, by an imminent Turkish invasion on a large scale. In an endeavour to ward off the imaginary peril he crowded division after division into Egypt, and evidently contemplated desperate struggles for the defence of the Suez Canal at no distant date.

In the early days, at the end of 1914 and beginning of 1915, it had been worth while for a score of thousand Turks to threaten the Canal and create as much disturbance as possible in order to delay the movement of troops from India, Australia and New Zealand to the European battlefield. But both the usefulness and feasibility of such an operation were destroyed by the great increase in the scale of the war in the eastern Mediterranean theatre which had been in progress during the whole year. The German and Turkish staffs were well content to rely upon threats and boasting, and to make the proclamation of their intention a substitute for the diversion of armies. "Egypt," exclaimed Enver Pasha in December, "is our objective"; and following this simple deception the British concentration in Egypt was vehemently pursued.

On the top of this came the reverse in Mesopotamia, for which Lord Kitchener had no direct responsibility. General Townshend had marched on Baghdad, and the War Committee was led to believe that he was himself the mainspring of the enterprise. General Nixon, the Commander-in-Chief in Mesopotamia, had not informed them that his audacious and hitherto brilliantly successful subordinate had in writing recorded his misgivings about the operation. In the event Townshend's force of about 20,000 men was on November 25 forced to retreat after a well-contested action at Ctesiphon and only escaped by a swift and disastrous retreat to a temporary refuge at Kut.

Sir William Robertson.

On December 3 the War Committee determined to recreate the Imperial General Staff at the War Office in an effective form. The decision was drastic. The experiment of making a Field-Marshal Secretary of State for War had run its full course. Lord Kitchener might still hold the Seals of Office, but his power, hitherto so overwhelming that it had absorbed and embodied the authority alike of the ministerial and the professional Chief, was now to be confined within limits which few politicians would accept in a Secretaryship of State. Sir William Robertson, Chief of the General Staff in France, was brought to Whitehall, and an Order in Council was issued establishing his

rights and responsibility in terms both strict and wide. Lord Kitchener acquiesced in the abrogation, not only of the exceptional personal powers which he had enjoyed, but of those which have always been inherent in the office which he retained.

The end of his great story is approaching: the long life full of action, lighted by hard-won achievement, crowned by power such as a British subject had rarely wielded and all the regard and honour that Britain and her Empire can bestow, was now declining through the shadows. The sudden onrush of the night, the deep waters of the north, were destined to preserve him and his renown from the shadows.

> "Better to sink beneath the shock
> Than moulder piecemeal on the rock."

The solemn days when he stood forth as Constable of Britain, beneath whose arm her untrained people braced themselves for war, were ended. His life of duty could only reach its consummation in a warrior's death. His record in the Great War as strategist, administrator and leader, will be judged by the eyes of other generations than our own. Let us hope they will also remember

Photo: Lafayette.

FIELD-MARSHAL SIR WILLIAM ROBERTSON.

Of Sir William Robertson it may be said that he was one of the most remarkable men who ever served in the British Army. Enlisting as a trooper in the 16th Lancers in 1877, he rose through all the non-commissioned grades until, in 1885, he was promoted troop-sergeant-major. He became a second-lieutenant three years later, and was posted to the 3rd Dragoon Guards. A man of exceptional ability, he entered the Staff College at Camberley in 1896, being the first ranker to do so. In 1914 Sir William Robertson was Q.M.G. with the Expeditionary Force in France, and later, in 1915, went to the War Office as Chief of the Imperial General Staff. In 1920 he was created a Field-Marshal, the only British soldier to rise from the lowest to the highest rank.

the comfort his character and personality gave to his countrymen in their hours of hardest trial.

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A Chain of Missed Chances.

It is impossible to assemble the long chain of fatal missed chances which prevented the forcing of the Dardanelles without experiencing a sense of awe. One sees in retrospect at least a dozen situations all beyond the control of the enemy, any one of which, decided differently, would have ensured success. If we had known when it was resolved to make the naval attack that an army would be available and would be given, a surprise combined naval and military attack upon the Gallipoli Peninsula would have been decided upon and backed with good-will. If an army had never been sent, the Navy with its minesweeping service well organized would have resumed its efforts after the check on March 18; and had it resumed, it would soon have exhausted the ammunition in the Turkish forts and swept the minefields. Had the dispatch of the 29th Division not been countermanded on February 20, or had it been packed in the transports in readiness to fight on disembarkation, Sir Ian Hamilton would have attacked the Gallipoli Peninsula almost immediately after March 18 and would, in that event, have found it ill-defended.

The battles of June and July were all critical in the last degree. Any substantial addition to the attack would have been decisive. The paralysis of the Executive during the formation of the Coalition Government in May, delayed for six weeks the arrival of the British reinforcements, and enabled the Turks to double the strength of their army. Thus the favourable moment at

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

LOADED "BEETLES" AT SUVLA BAY.

The steel-plated motor-lighters which, as described in the text, were employed at Suvla Bay during the landing of the infantry were again used at the evacuation. They are seen here loaded with stores twenty-four hours before the final scene. Known as "beetles," the lighters were bullet-proof, and were designed to carry five hundred men. They could make a speed of five knots.

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

GETTING A GUN AWAY.

The problems and difficulties confronting those responsible for evacuating the army on Gallipoli were many and varied. Many and varied were the devices employed to overcome them. Here a raft is seen being towed away from Suvla Bay loaded with gun, limber and personnel. Had the brains and energy responsible for the scheme of evacuation been available on the beach at Suvla Bay on the morning of August 8, 1915, Liman von Sanders's reinforcements from Bulair would have made their forced march in vain.

the begining of July was thrown away. The Battle of Suvla Bay in August was marked by a combination of evil happenings extraordinary among the hazards of war. The story of the IXth British Corps and of the whole Suvla landing would be incredible if it were not true. The resignation of Lord Fisher, my dismissal from the Admiralty, and the unpopularity of the Dardanelles enterprise through ignorance, intimidated our successors on the Board of Admiralty from accepting responsibility for the risks that were necessary.

The refusal of the Greek alliance and army when offered in 1914; the failure to obtain that alliance and army when sought in 1915; its mad rejection by Russia; the delicate balance on which the fateful decision of Bulgaria depended; the extraordinary circumstances in Paris which led in September, 1915, to the appointment of General Sarrail and to the proposal of the French Government to send a large expedition to take possession of the Asiatic shore of the Dardanelles, and the reversal of this policy which offered so many prospects of success; the diversion of all the forces that became available towards the end of 1915 from the vital objective of the Dardanelles and Constantinople to the prodigal, and for nearly three years indecisive, operations from Salonica; the final decision to evacuate Gallipoli, at the time when the position of the Turkish Army was most desperate and the British Navy most confident —all these are separate tragedies.

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The War of Exhaustion.

The end of the Dardanelles campaign closed the second great period of the struggle. There was nothing left on

land now but the war of exhaustion—not only of armies but of nations. No more strategy, very little tactics; only the dull wearing down of the weaker combination by exchanging lives; only the multiplying of machinery on both sides to exchange them quicker. The continuous front now stretched not only from the Alps to the seas, but across the Balkan Peninsula, across Palestine, across Mesopotamia. The Central Empires had successfully defended their southern flank in the Balkans and in Turkey. Their victory quelled simultaneously all likelihood of any attempt against their northern flank upon the Baltic.

All such ideas had received their quietus. Good, plain, straightforward frontal attacks by valiant flesh and blood against wire and machine guns, "killing Germans" while Germans killed allies twice as often, calling out the men of forty, of fifty, and even fifty-five, and the youths of eighteen, sending the wounded soldiers back three or four times over into the shambles—such were the sole manifestations now reserved for the military art. And when at the end, three years later, the throng of uniformed functionaries who in the seclusion of their offices had complacently presided over this awful process, presented Victory to their exhausted nations, it proved only less ruinous to the victor than to the vanquished.

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

THE LAST OF GALLIPOLI.

Stores burning on the deserted Gallipoli beach. Upon this photograph, taken from the deck of H.M.S. *Cornwallis* at 5 a.m. in the morning, may be rung down the curtain at the close of that which was at once one of the greatest tragedies and one of the finest feats of arms in the history of the British Empire. The campaign was a failure, inasmuch as the objective was not attained. That success could have been achieved, and that on more than one occasion, there can hardly be room for doubt.

CHAPTER LV

THE HIGH COMMAND

1916—Europe Gripped in the Vice—Galliéni made Minister of War—Galliéni and Joffre —Galliéni, Minister of War—France and the Joffre Legend—Sir John French Recalled—The New Commander-in-Chief—His Credentials.

THE New Year's light of 1916 rising upon a frantic and miserable world revealed in its full extent the immense battlefield to which Europe was reduced and on which the noblest nations of Christendom mingled in murderous confusion. It was now certain that the struggle would be prolonged to an annihilating conclusion. The enormous forces on either side were so well matched that the injuries they must suffer and inflict in their struggles were immeasurable. There was no escape. All the combatants in both combinations were gripped in a vice from which no single State could extricate itself.

1916.

The northern Provinces of France, invaded and in German occupation, inspired the French people with a commanding impulse to drive the enemy from their soil. The trench lines on which the armies were in deadlock ran —not along the frontiers, where perhaps parley would not have been impossible—but through the heart of France. The appeal to clear the national territory from foreign oppression went home to every cottage and steeled every heart. Germany on the other hand, while her armies stood almost everywhere on conquered territory, could not in the full flush of her strength yield what she had gained with so much blood, nor pay forfeit for her original miscalculations, nor make reparation for the wrong she had done. Any German Dynasty or Government which had proposed so wise and righteous a course would have been torn to pieces. The French losses and the German conquests of territory thus equally compelled a continuance of the struggle by both nations. A similar incentive operated upon Russia; and in addition the belief that defeat meant revolution hardened all governing resolves. In Britain obligations of honour to her suffering Allies, and particularly to Belgium, forbade the slightest suggestion of slackening or withdrawal. And behind this decisive claim of honour there welled up from the heart of the island race a fierce suppressed passion and resolve for victory at all costs and at all risks, latent since the downfall of Napoleon.

Not less peremptory were the forces dominating the other parties to the struggle. Italy had newly entered the war upon promises which offered her a dazzling reward. These promises were embodied in the Pact of London. They involved conditions to which Austria-Hungary could never submit without final ruin as a great Power. The acceptance by Britain and France of the Russian claim to Constantinople condemned Turkey to a similar fate. Failure meant therefore to both the Austrian and the Turkish Empires not only defeat but dissolution. As for Bulgaria, she could only expect from the victory of the Allies the dire measure she had meted to Serbia.

Europe Gripped in the Vice.

Thus in every quarter the stakes were

desperate or even mortal; and each of the vast confederacies was riveted together within itself and each part chained to its respective foe by bonds which only the furnace of war could fuse or blast away. Wealth, science, civilization, patriotism, steam transport and world credit enabled the whole strength of every belligerent to be continually applied to the war. The entire populations fought and laboured, women and men alike, to the utmost of their physical destructiveness. National industry was in every country converted to the production of war material. Tens of millions of soldiers, scores of thousands of cannon hurled death across battle lines, themselves measured in thousands of miles. Havoc on such a scale had never even been dreamed of in the past, and had never proceeded at such a speed in all human history. To carry this process to the final limit was the dearest effort of every nation, and of nearly all that was best and noblest in every nation.

But at the same time that Europe had been fastened into this frightful bondage, the art of war had fallen into an almost similar helplessness. No means of procuring a swift decision presented itself to the strategy of the commanders, or existed on the battlefields of the armies. The chains which held the warring nations to their task were not destined to be severed by military genius; no sufficient preponderance of force was at the disposal of either side; no practical method of a decisive offensive had been discovered; and the ill-directed fires of war, leaving the fetters unbroken, preyed through fatal years upon the flesh of the captive nations.

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Galliéni made Minister of War.

Joffre, if not a heaven-born general, was unquestionably an impressive personality. His position had become firmly established in relation to the grand scale of events. His sense of proportion had from the outset been extended to the limits of the whole battlefield. No other living man had had the advantages of his standpoint or environment. He was accustomed to think only in terms of armies and groups of armies; all the other frenzied and frightful detail was definitely beneath his consciousness, as it was beneath his sphere of duty. Allied to this supreme outlook, which necessarily only a few men in any country can enjoy, Joffre had the physique and temperament exactly suited to the kind of strains he had to bear and the scale of the decisions he had to take. On these solid foundations the splendid position which he occupied and the tremendous events over which he presided soon built up a vast prestige.

The censorship, for reasons which certainly had weight, discouraged or forbade both in France and England the "writing up" of any generals except the Commander-in-Chief in each country. Thus the population of the allied countries knew only Joffre, and even in France it was to Joffre, and Joffre above all others, that the trusting faith of the multitude was month by month and year by year deliberately and mechanically directed.

Nevertheless, as the weary months of trench warfare in 1915 passed away, diversified only by the costly failures of the French offensive in Artois in the spring and in Champagne in the autumn, the currents of hostility gathered continually in volume and intensity. The great popularity of Millerand, who became Minister of War in the early days of the struggle, was slowly sapped through his unswerving loyalty to Joffre, and upon the reconstitution of the French Government under Briand at the end of October, 1915, Millerand disappeared from the scene. He was succeeded as Minister of War by none other than Galliéni.

Galliéni and Joffre.

The relations between Joffre and the new Minister were remarkable. Only age had prevented Galliéni from occupying the supreme post at the outbreak of the war. Joffre had actually served under his orders in a minor capacity in Madagascar. On the declaration of war Galliéni had received a letter from the Minister, approved by Joffre, appointing him Joffre's successor should the com-

Photo: Newspaper Illustrations.

H.M. THE KING IN FRANCE.

During the anxious years of 1914–18 H.M. the King, as is well known, paid several visits to the Western Front, where he saw for himself the conditions under which his men were fighting. The King is seen here greeting General Joffre, somewhere in France, towards the end of 1915. M. Poincaré is on the King's right, while in the extreme left of the picture is the Prince of Wales.

mand of the French armies fall vacant. The extraordinary part played by Galliéni in the crisis of the Marne has already been described, and Joffre was certainly not unconscious of the claims that might arise from it. No sooner was the victory won than he withdrew the Sixth Army from the control of Galliéni, leaving him again simply Governor of Paris.

When in December, 1915, the French armies were formed into two groups, Galliéni was anxious to be called to the command of one of them. But Joffre's choice fell elsewhere. Some months later, when the command of the Sixth Army fell vacant, it was offered to Galliéni. But seeing that this command was only a fraction of what he had directed in the Battle of the Marne, Galliéni put the proposal on one side. Finally, on October 1, 1915, Joffre, wishing to place on record once for all his view of Galliéni's contribution to the great victory, had caused to be published in the *Gazette* a citation which gave widespread offence.[1] Galliéni's comment is said to have been: "I could never serve again under the orders of Joffre."

Galliéni, Minister of War.

But in October, 1915, the rôles are swiftly reversed, and it is Galliéni who holds the superior position, not only as Minister of War, but as a greater soldier, and, in the eyes of many, a greater hero. In the brief portion of Galliéni's life

1 "Est cité à l'ordre de l'Armée :

"Galliéni, Général, Gouverneur Militaire et Commandant des Armées de Paris Commandant du camp retranché et des armées de Paris, et placé le 2 septembre 1914 sous les ordres du commandent en chef, a fait preuvre des plus hautes qualités militaires :

"En contribuant, par les renseignements qu'il avait recueillis, à déterminer la direction de marche prise par l'aile droite allemande ;

"En orientant judicieusement, pour participer à la bataille, les forces mobiles à sa disposition ;

"En facilitant, par tous les moyens en son pouvoir, l'accomplissement de la mission assignée par le Commandant en chef à ces forces mobiles."

(Ordre du 25 septembre 1915.)

which was lived on the world-stage no feature bears the sign of true greatness more than his treatment of Joffre. Convinced by Briand that Joffre, whatever his shortcomings, was at that time necessary to the national defence, he supported him in every conceivable manner in the field, and defended him in the Chamber on numerous occasions with loyal comradeship. But while thus to the confusion of his own friends and admirers he paralysed for the time being the hostile movement against Joffre, Galliéni did not fail as a Minister to press for a reform of the many abuses and usurpations of power which had grown up in the Grand Quartier-Général at Chantilly. Such was the situation in the French High Command at this period when Kitchener was feverishly seeking to defend Egypt and Falkenhayn was writing a memorandum about Verdun.

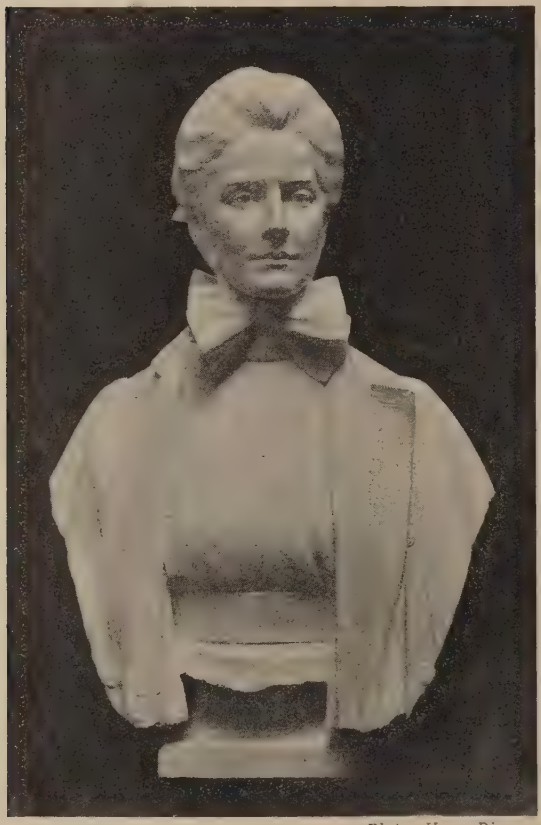


Photo: Henry Dixon.

EDITH LOUISA CAVELL.

Edith Cavell was born on August 4, 1865, at Swardeston, Norfolk. She was educated first in England and later at Brussels. Having trained as a nurse, Miss Cavell in course of time returned to Brussels, and was practising her profession there at the outbreak of war in 1914. She elected to stay at her post, and lived and worked in Belgium until August 5, 1915, when she was arrested by the Germans and charged with harbouring refugees and helping them to escape. On October 11, of the same year, Nurse Cavell was sentenced to death, the sentence being carried out at 2 a.m. on the following morning. This was one more act which, justifiable as it may have been from a purely military point of view, outraged the feelings of the civilized world.

Every great nation in times of crisis has its own way of doing things. The Germans looked to their Kaiser—the All-Highest—whose word was law—but they also looked after him. In some way or other the changing group of dominating personalities at the head of the German Empire worked the Imperial Oracle. We too in England have our own methods, more difficult to explain to foreigners perhaps than any others—and on the whole more inchoate, more crude, more clumsy. Still—they work. And there is also the French method. Studying French war politics, one is struck first by their extreme complexity. The number of persons involved, the intricacy of their relations, the swiftness and yet the smoothness with which their whole arrangement is continually changed, all baffle the stranger during the event and weary him afterwards in the tale. The prevailing impression is that of a swarm of bees—all buzzing together, and yet each bee, or nearly every bee—with a perfectly clear idea of what has got to be done in the practical interests of the hive.

France and the Joffre Legend.

At the end of 1915 there were two very definite convictions established in the wide

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

GENERAL JOFFRE AT THE BRITISH G.H.Q.

This photograph, taken early in 1916, shows General Joffre being received by Sir Douglas Haig at the Chateau de Beaurepaire, Montreuil. A short time before this meeting of the two commanders took place, Sir Douglas Haig had succeeded Sir John French as Commander-in-Chief of the British Forces in France.

secret circles of France—Ministers, Lobbies, Army, Press, Society—which were actually concerned in the national defence. The first was that Joffre was not Napoleon; the second that his name and fame constituted an invaluable asset to France. "Unity of Command" was not yet within the bounds of possibility, "unity of front"—all the fronts in one relation—was already a watchword. If this was to be achieved, and if France was to gain or keep control of the strategy of the allied Powers in all the Conferences and joint decisions that were necessary to coherent military action, what martial figure-head could she produce comparable to Joffre?

France—the France that was conducting the war and fighting for life and honour—believed that the name Joffre and the presence of Joffre would impress and dominate the inexperienced but on the whole well-meaning English and carry weight with the remote colossus of Russia. But they did not like the idea of his leading their remaining armies into further offensives. How then to combine the two desirables? On this basis and with this object a prolonged series of delicate, subtle processes, manœuvres and devices were elaborated. Joffre was to be made a General of Generals, established in Paris, out of contact with any particular army, his eye ranging over all, presiding over every inter-allied military conference, brought forward by the French Government to pronounce with commanding authority to allied Cabinets or Statesmen, while the actual conduct of the French armies against Germany would be entrusted to someone else. To this end, and as a first step, Joffre was appointed in November, 1915, to the command of all the French armies, whether in France or in the Orient, and Castelnau was made Major-

Photo: L.N.A.

A WINTER ISSUE TO THE MEN OF THE B.E.F.

The hardships of a winter campaign have to be experienced to be believed. In the first winter of the Great War the troops in France and Flanders, standing firm in their water-logged trenches, suffered severely from both wet and cold. The goatskin or sheepskin jackets shown above had a marked effect in keeping men fit who might otherwise have been forced to report sick. Later in the Great War this type of jacket was replaced by a strong leather jerkin.

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

SOLDIER'S OVERALL FOR TRENCH RAIDS.

This somewhat unusual garment was worn by patrols and raiding parties when the ground was covered with snow. At such times the dark shades of the ordinary service uniform would have been thrown into strong relief against the white background and casualties would accordingly have mounted.

General at headquarters, an appointment which was intended to carry with it in the highest possible sense the attributes of Chief of the Staff with an implied reversion of the supreme command in France.

* * * *

Sir John French Recalled.

The end of the year brought also a change in the command of the British Armies in France. We have seen in what circumstances and with what misgivings Sir John French had allowed himself to be involved in the previous September at Loos in the unwisdom of the great French offensive in Champagne. He had conformed with loyalty and ultimately even with ardour to the wishes of Lord Kitchener and to the acquiescence of the British Cabinet. But all this stood him in no stead on the morrow of failure. Those who had not the conviction or resolution to arrest the forlorn attack became easily censorious of its conduct after the inevitable failure. During the course of December proceedings were set on foot by which, at the end of the year, Sir John French was transferred from the command of the British Army in France to that of the forces at home, and succeeded in that high situation by the Commander of his First Army, Sir Douglas Haig.

These chapters recount the fall from dazzling situations of many eminent men; and it is perhaps worth while at this point to place the reader on his guard against unworthy or uncharitable judgments. The Great War wore out or justly or unjustly cast aside leaders in every sphere as lavishly as it squandered the lives of private soldiers—French, Kitchener, Joffre, Nivelle, Cadorna, Jellicoe, Asquith, Briand, Painlevé, and many others, even in the victorious states. All made their contribution and fell. Whatever the pain at the moment to individuals, there are no circumstances of humiliation in such supersessions. Only those who succeeded, who lived through the convulsion and emerged prosperously at the end, know by what obscure twists and turns of chance they escaped a similar lot. "Those two impostors," Triumph and Disaster, never played their pranks more shamelessly than in the Great War. When men have done their duty and done their best, have shirked no labour and flinched from no

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

TYPES OF SHRAPNEL-PROOF HELMETS.

The shrapnel-proof helmet, or to give it the names by which it was better known in the British Army, tin hat or trench bowler, was one of the most successful life-savers evolved during the Great War. The helmet was not proof against a bullet or against a direct hit by a heavy fragment of shell, but it saved countless lives by resisting shrapnel and by diverting spent bullets and small fragments of shell. The various types shown here are as follows:—Back row (from left to right): 1, Portuguese, 1917 pattern; 2, American; 3, British; 4, Belgian, 1917 pattern; 5, French, 1916 pattern with vizor; 6, French, 1916 pattern. First row, from left to right: 1 German with reinforcing piece, from Verdun Front; 2, sniper's mask; 3, Austrian.

decision that it was their task to take, there is no disgrace in eventual personal failure. They are but good comrades who fall in the earlier stages of an assault, which others, profiting by their efforts and experiences, ultimately carry to victory.

From the drawing by Bruce Bairnsfather.

"WELL, IF YOU KNOWS OF A BETTER 'OLE, GO TO IT!"

The Great War inspired much that was dignified and wonderful in the realms of literature and art. So awe-inspiring an event could hardly have failed in this. There were the poems of Rupert Brooke and Laurence Binyon; the pictures of Orpen and Wyllie; the cartoons of Raemaekers and Partridge. Different from all these were the drawings of Captain Bruce Bairnsfather, who served in France with the 1st Bn. The Royal Warwickshire Regiment. Bairnsfather's humorous drawings of life on the Western Front became famous wherever the English language is spoken and the mental make-up of the British soldier understood. They enabled men and women to laugh at a time when it was not always easy to laugh. In their own way they helped to win the war, and the example given above, the most famous of them all, together with those on the opposite page, have for this reason been thought worthy of a place in this work.

The New Commander-in-Chief.

Alike in personal efficiency and professional credentials, Sir Douglas Haig was the first officer of the British Army. He had obtained every qualification, gained every experience and served in every appointment requisite for the General Command. He was a cavalry officer of social distinction and independent means, whose whole life had been devoted to military study and practice. He had been Adjutant of his regiment; he had played in its polo team; he had passed through the Staff College; he had been Chief Staff Officer to the Cavalry Division in the South African war; he had earned a Brevet and decorations in the field; he had commanded a column; he had held a command in

From the drawing by Bruce Bairnsfather.

COIFFURE IN THE TRENCHES.

" Keep yer 'ead still, or I'll 'ave yer blinkin' ear off ! "

From the drawing by Bruce Bairnsfather.

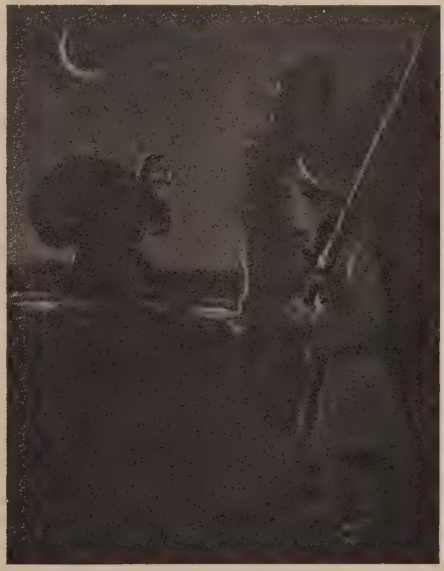
THE THIRST FOR REPRISALS.

" 'And me a rifle, someone. I'll give these ——s 'ell for this ! "

From the drawing by Bruce Bairnsfather.

THINGS THAT MATTER.

Colonel Fitz-Shrapnel receives the following message from "G.H.Q." :—" Please let us know, as soon as possible, the number of tins of raspberry jam issued to you last Friday."



From the drawing by Bruce Bairnsfather.

NO POSSIBLE DOUBT WHATEVER.

Sentry : " 'Alt ! Who goes there ? "
He of the bundle : " You shut yer —— mouth, or I'll —— come and knock yer —— head off ! "
Sentry : " Pass, friend ! "

India; he had served at the War Office; he had commanded at Aldershot the two divisions which formed the only organized British army corps, and from this position he had led the First British army corps to France. He had borne the principal fighting part in every battle during Sir John French's command. At the desperate crisis of the First Battle of Ypres, British battalions and batteries, wearied, outnumbered and retreating, had been inspirited by the spectacle of the Corps Commander riding slowly forward at the head of his whole staff along the shell-swept Menin Road into close contact with the actual fighting line.

His Credentials.

It was impossible to assemble around any other officer a series of appointments and qualifications in any way comparable in their cumulative effects with these. He had fulfilled with exceptional credit every requirement to which the pre-war British military hierarchy attached importance. For many years, and at every stage in his career, he had been looked upon alike by superiors and equals as a man certain to rise, if he survived, to the summit of the British Army. Colonel Henderson, the biographer of Stonewall Jackson, Professor at the Staff College during Haig's graduation, had predicted this event. His conduct in the first year of the war had vindicated every hope. His appointment as Commander-in-Chief on the departure of Sir John French created no surprise, aroused no heart-burnings, excited no jealousy. The military profession reposed in him a confidence which the varied fortunes, disappointments and miscalculations attendant upon three years of war on the greatest scale left absolutely unshaken.

The esteem of his military colleagues found a healthy counterpart in his own self-confidence. He knew the place was his by merit and by right. He knew he had no rivals, and that he owed his place neither to favour nor usurpation. This attitude of mind was invaluable. Allied to a resolute and equable temperament it enabled him to sustain with composure, not only the shocks of defeat and disaster at the hands of the enemy, but those more complex and not less wearing anxieties arising from his relations with French allies and British Cabinets. He was as sure of himself at the head of the British Army as a country gentleman on the soil which his ancestors had trod for generations, and to whose cultivation he had devoted his life. But the Great War owned no Master; no one was equal to its vast and novel issues; no human hand controlled its hurricanes; no eye could pierce its whirlwind dust-clouds. In the course of this narrative it is necessary in the interests of the future to seek and set forth in all sincerity what are believed to be the true facts and values. But when this process is complete, the fact remains that no other subject of the King could have endured the ordeal which was his lot with the phlegm, the temper, and the fortitude of Sir Douglas Haig.

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

THE CLOTH HALL, YPRES, 1916.

German gunners were nothing if not thorough. The above photograph, taken on January 23, 1916, shows all that remained at that date of the beautifully proportioned building of which a photograph was given on page 337. As the war progressed the towers and walls were gradually blown to pieces, until in 1918 comparatively little of the Cloth Hall remained.

CHAPTER LVI

FALKENHAYN'S CHOICE

Falkenhayn's Position—Attack the Strong or the Weak—Falkenhayn's Achievement in 1915—The Initiative Returns to Germany—The Politics of Roumania—Roumania at the Outbreak of War—Roumanian Policy in 1915—Her Isolation at Christmas—The Salonica Expedition—The Influence of Lloyd George and Briand—Still Not Too Late—Power of the Unexpected—Falkenhayn's Memorandum—East or West?—His Decision—Examination of His Policy—The Need to Win Roumania—Breaking the Blockade by Land—Roumania or Verdun.

THE opening scene of the year 1916 lies in the Cabinet of the German Main Headquarters, and the principal figure is General von Falkenhayn, the virtual Commander-in-Chief of the Central Empires.

Falkenhayn's Position.

On the evening of September 14, 1914, Falkenhayn, then Minister of War, had been appointed by the Emperor Chief of the German General Staff. From this post General von Moltke who, when the decision of the Marne had become unmistakable, had said to the Emperor: "Your Majesty, we have lost the war," had retired, broken in health and heart. The new Director of the German Army also retained for a time his position as Minister of War; and when early in the New Year he ceded this latter post, it was to a nominee of his own. Falkenhayn was therefore armed with the fullest powers, and during a period of almost exactly two years he continued to wield them undisputed.

He had succeeded to a stricken inheritance. The great stake had been played and lost by his predecessor. The rush on Paris, trampling down Belgium, and with it all hope of ending the war by one blow, had failed. It had cost Germany her good name before the world, it had brought into the field against her the sea power, the wealth and the ever-growing military strength of the British Empire. In the east the defeat of the Austrians in the Battle of Lemberg had balanced the victories of Hindenburg and Ludendorff, and the rulers of Germany, their armies at a standstill, their territories blockaded, their sea-borne commerce arrested, must prepare for a prolonged struggle against a combination of States of at least twice their population and wealth, commanding through sea power the resources of the whole world and possessed at this juncture of the choice where to strike the next blow.

* * * *

The Truths of War are absolute, but the principles governing their application have to be deduced on each occasion from the circumstances, which are always different; and in consequence no rules are any guide to action. Study of the past is invaluable as a means of training and storing the mind, but it is no help without selective discernment of the particular facts and of their emphasis, relation and proportion.

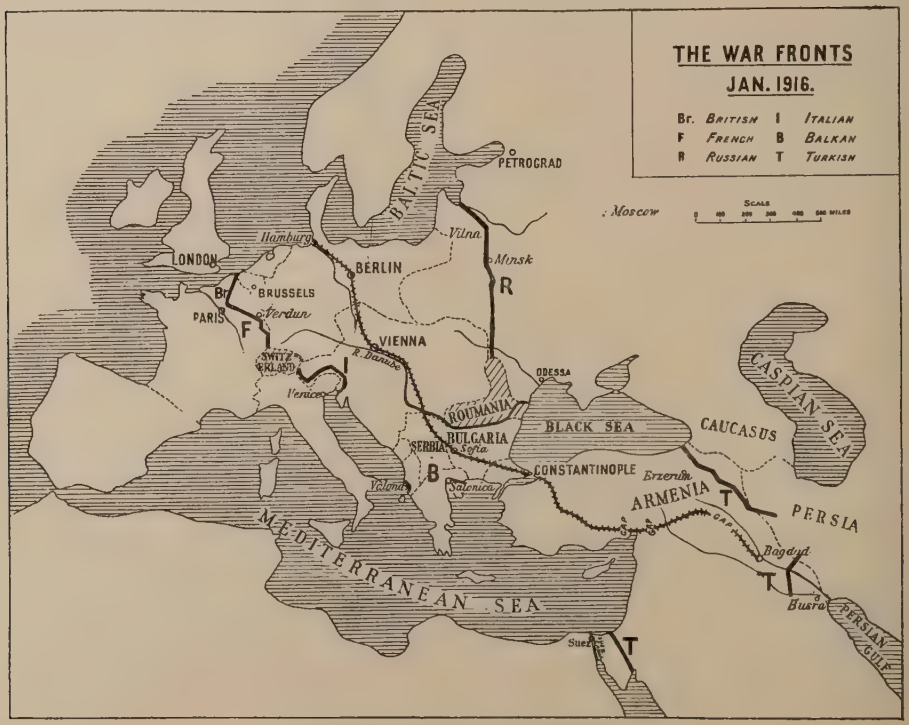
Attack the Strong or the Weak.

German, like British military policy, oscillated throughout the Great War between two opposed conceptions of strategy. Reduced to the simplest terms the contrasted theories may be expressed as follows: To attack the strong, or to attack the weak. Once all attempts against the Dardanelles were finally excluded from consideration, little was left to Britain but to attack the strong. The Balkans were lost, and the

scale of the armies required to produce decisive results in the Balkan Peninsula or in Turkey had by this time outrun the limits of available sea power. The prizes had disappeared or dwindled; the efforts required to gain them had been multiplied beyond all reason. But to Germany, with her central position and excellent railway system, both alternative policies were constantly open, and her leaders, in their torment of perplexity, were drawn now in one direction and now in the other.

To contend that either of these theories was wholly and invariably right and the other wrong would be to press argument beyond the bounds of common sense. Obviously if you can beat your strongest opponent in the hostile combination you should do so. But if you cannot beat your strongest opponent in the main theatre, nor he beat you; or if it is very unlikely that you can do so and if the cost of failure will be very great, then surely it is time to consider whether the downfall of your strongest foe cannot be accomplished through the ruin of his weakest ally, or one of her weaker allies; and in this connection a host of political, economic and geographical advantages may arise and play their part in the argument. Every case must be judged upon its merit and in relation to the whole of the circumstances of the occasion. The issue is not one for rigid or absolute decision in general terms; but a strong inclination in theory, based upon profound reflection, is a good guide amid the conflict and confusion of facts.

These pages will leave the reader in no doubt about the opinion of their author. From first to last it is contended that once the main armies were in deadlock in France the true strategy for both sides was to attack the weaker partners in the opposite combination with the utmost speed and ample force. According to this view, Germany was unwise to attack France in August, 1914, and especially unwise to invade Belgium for



THE WAR FRONTS, JANUARY, 1916.
Sketch map showing the battle line from the North Sea to the Persian Gulf.

Photo: Central News.

ROUMANIAN MOUNTED MACHINE-GUN BATTERY.

The Roumanian army, like that of the other Balkan States, had prior to 1914 seen service in the Balkan Wars. Many of her soldiers were, therefore, experienced and hardened veterans. During the period between 1914 and 1916 Roumania, while she still remained a neutral State, seized the opportunity to raise her army to a high standard of efficiency. The above photograph shows a mounted machine-gun battery engaged in field exercises in 1916.

that purpose. She should instead have struck down Russia and left France to break her teeth against the German fortress and trench lines. Acting thus she would probably have avoided war with the British Empire, at any rate during the opening, and for her most important, phase of the struggle. The first German decision to attack the strongest led to her defeat at the Marne and the Yser, and left her baffled and arrested with the ever-growing might of an implacable British Empire on her hands. Thus 1914 ended.

Falkenhayn's Achievement in 1915.

But in 1915 Germany turned to the second alternative, and her decision was attended by great success. Leaving the British and French to shatter their armies against her trench lines in France, Germany marched and led her allies against Russia, with the result that by the autumn enormous territories had been conquered from Russia; all the Russian system of fortresses and strategic railways was in German hands, while the Russian armies were to a large extent destroyed and the Russian State grievously injured.

The only method by which the Allies could rescue Russia was by forcing the Dardanelles. This was the only counter-stroke that could be effective. If it had succeeded it would have established direct and permanent contact between Russia and her western allies, it would have driven Turkey, or at the least Turkey in Europe, out of the war, and might well have united the whole of the Balkan States, Serbia, Greece, Bulgaria and Roumania, against Austria and Germany. Russia would thus have received direct succour, and in addition would have experienced an enormous relief through the pressure which the combined Balkan States would instantly have applied to Austria-Hungary.

However, the narrow and local views of British Admirals and Generals and of the French Headquarters had obstructed this indispensable manœuvre. Instead of a clear strategic conception being clothed and armed with all that the science of staffs could suggest, it had been resisted, hampered, starved and

left to languish. The time gained by this mismanagement and the situation created by the Russian defeats enabled Germany in September to carry the policy of attacking the weaker a step further. Falkenhayn organized an attack upon Serbia. Bulgaria was gained to the German side, Serbia was conquered, and direct contact was established between the Central Empires and Turkey.

The Initiative Returns to Germany.

The failure and final abandoment of the Dardanelles campaign thus sealed the fate not only of the Balkan States but also of Russia. The defeat of the French and British armies in the disastrous battles of Champagne and Loos proved the German front unbreakable in the west. The direct contact between Germany and Turkey established through the accession of Bulgaria gripped Turkey and threw open the road to the east. The year 1915 was therefore one of great success for Germany, and Falkenhayn could claim with justice that by the mistakes of her enemies and by her own adoption of the policy of attacking the weaker she had retrieved in its course the disastrous situation in which she had been left at the end of 1914. Opportunity and initiative had returned to Germany: the next move lay with her, and 1916 dawned in breathless expectation of what it would be.

* * * *

Nowhere was the choice of Germany awaited with more strained attention than in Roumania. The policy of a small State overshadowed by tremendous neighbouring Empires, at grips with one another, from both of whom she coveted important provinces, was necessarily one of calculation. In the years before the war Roumania conceived herself to have been defrauded of Bessarabia by Russia after the Russo-Turkish War of 1878. From Hungary her desires were at once natural and ambitious. Siebenburgen, Transylvania and to a lesser extent the Bukovina were largely inhabited by men of Roumanian race, and in Transylvania particularly Roumanian sentiment was sternly repressed by the Hungarian Government. To be united to these unredeemed provinces, to join her outlying kinsfolk to the Motherland, to build in one form or another the integral, ethnological unit of a Great Roumania, was throughout the supreme and dominating motive at Bucharest.

These aims had for generations been obvious both to Russia and to Austria-Hungary, who watched without illusion and fully armed every move in Roumanian affairs. On her other borders Roumania clashed with two Balkan States. She competed with Serbian ambitions for the eventual reversion of the Banat of Temesvar. She had profited by the crisis of the Balkan War of 1912 to take the Dobruja from Bulgaria. To her grave preoccupations about Russia and Austria-Hungary, Roumania must henceforth add a persistent fear of Bulgarian revenge.

The Politics of Roumania.

These grim external relationships were aggravated by the complications of domestic and dynastic politics. The Roumanian Conservatives, headed by Majoresco, favoured Germany. The Liberals, headed by Bratiano, the new Prime Minister, favoured France. Outside official circles the most prominent politician on the side of the Entente was Také Jonesco, and on the side of Germany Carp. The King was not only pro-German but German, and a faithful son of the House of Hohenzollern to boot. The Heir Apparent was pro-French and his wife pro-English. Both the King and his successor had exceptional consorts. The poetry of "Carmen Sylva" is widely acclaimed; the courage of Queen Marie was to remain undaunted through every trial the tempest had in store. In short, Roumania, if war came, could move in either direction towards alternative prizes glittering across chasms, and in either case she would find a Party and a Royal Family apt and happy to execute her policy. To choose would be an awful hazard. Yet not to choose, to linger in futile neutrality, might cast away the supreme opportunity of Roumanian national history.

A minor complication upon the threshold of action was a Treaty signed in 1883 between Roumania and Austria-Hungary, to which Germany and Italy had subsequently acceded. By this the two parties engaged to follow a friendly policy, to give mutual support and not enter into any alliance or engagement directed against the other party. If Roumania without provocation on her part were attacked Austria-Hungary was bound to bring her in ample time help and assistance. If Austria-Hungary were attacked in the same circumstances in a portion of her State bordering on Roumania, Roumania was reciprocally bound to come to her aid.

This Treaty had been kept strictly secret, and up to the outbreak of war was known in Roumania only to the King and to the Prime Minister. But Russia had deep suspicions that something of the sort existed, and in her railway strategy at least counted Roumania as a potential foe. In 1913 the Treaty, though it still stood, had become extremely precarious, and Count Czernin, the future Austro-Hungarian Foreign Secretary and at that time Austrian Minister to Bucharest was charged specially with the duty of ascertaining from King Carol what reliance could be placed upon the compact. He achieved his object by suggesting to the King that the Alliance should be ratified by the Parliaments at Vienna, Budapest and Bucharest. This test was conclusive. "The alarm evinced by the King," writes Czernin, "at the suggestion—at the very idea that the carefully guarded secret of the existence of an alliance should be divulged, proved to me how totally impossible it would be in the circumstances to infuse fresh life into such dead matter."

Roumania at the Outbreak of War.

Swiftly upon this came the bombs of Sarajevo. The Archduke Franz Ferdinand was friendly to Roumania and adverse to the Magyar domination of Hungary. He was believed to favour a scheme of forming a great Roumania at the expense of Hungary, and incorporating the whole unit in a tripartite Empire under a Triple instead of a Dual Monarchy. His murder therefore aroused in Rumania not only personal sympathy but national disappointment. At the same time his disappearance removed one of the ties which connected Roumania with the Teutonic Powers. It was left for the Austrian Ultimatum to Serbia to sever the others.

Almost at the same hour when Sir Edward Grey was reading the brutal terms of this document to the British Cabinet in Downing Street, Count Czernin was repeating them to King Carol in Bucharest. "Never shall I forget," writes Czernin, "the impression it made on the old King when he heard it. He, wise old politician that he was, recognized at once the immeasurable possibilities of such a step, and before I finished reading the document he interrupted me, exclaiming, 'It will be a world war.' It was long before he could collect himself . . . ."[1]

Czernin continues: "The Ultimatum and the danger of war . . . completely altered the Roumanian attitude, and it was suddenly recognized that Roumania could achieve her object by other means, not by peace but by war—not with, but against the [Austro-Hungarian] Monarchy. I would never have believed it possible that such a rapid and total change could have occurred practically within a few hours. Genuine and unsimulated indignation at the tone of the Ultimatum was the order of the day, and the universal conclusion arrived at was 'Austria has gone mad. . . .' Like a rock standing in the angry sea of hatred, poor old King Carol was alone with his German sympathies."

Upon the complicated politics of aspiring Roumania the Great War had thus supervened. Russia and Austria-Hungary sprang at each other in mortal conflict, while high above the European scene rose the flaming sword of Germany. Each side bid for Roumania's favours and offered bribes for Roumania's intervention. But the inducements of the Great Powers took the form, not of ceding portions of their own territory to Roumanian sovereignty, but rather of promising to cede portions of their rivals' territory to Roumania if

[1] *In the World War:* Count Ottokar Czernin.

Photo: Henri Manuel.

GENERAL SARRAIL.

Maurice Paul Emmanuel Sarrail was born at Carcassone, April 6, 1856. In the course of a lengthy term of service in the French Army, which included operations in Tunis and Algeria with the Foreign Legion, General Sarrail had, prior to 1914, held many important military appointments. During the earlier stages of the Great War he commanded the Third French Army and later in 1915 took command of the French Army of the Orient at Salonica. In January, 1916, he assumed command of all the Allied forces on that front.

with her assistance they won the war. The question which Roumania had to decide was, Who would win the War? It was very difficult to tell, yet on judging rightly depended Ruin or Empire. Long did Roumania hesitate before she gave her answer.

Roumanian Policy in 1915.

There was no doubt where at the outset her sympathies lay. Roumania saw like all neutral states, like all detached observers, how flagrantly the Central Powers had put themselves in the wrong and how grossly they had blundered. On the balance far more was to be gained by Roumania from the downfall of Austria-Hungary than from that of Russia. The pro-French Bratiano ministry was in power. Také Jonesco, like Venizelos in Greece, never swerved from the conviction that England would always come out victorious. Sympathies, merits, interest, mood, all pointed towards Britain, France and Russia. On the other side was King Carol with the Treaty on his conscience — and the fear of national destruction at his heart.

Prudence enjoined delay, and in this atmosphere any proposal of honouring the alliance and joining Austria was out of the question. The Roumanian Government followed the Italian example of declaring that as there had not been an unprovoked attack upon Austria the *casus fœderis* had not arisen. Roumania declared neutrality, and King Carol had to be content with this. The policy of Roumania henceforward is sourly described by Czernin in the following terms, which cannot be considered just unless her difficulties are also comprehended: "The Roumanian Government consciously and deliberately placed itself between the two groups of Powers and allowed itself to be driven and pushed by each, got the largest amount of advantages from each, and watched for the moment when it could be seen which was the stronger, in order then to fall upon the weaker."

Her Isolation at Christmas.

While the old King lived his influence was sufficient, in spite of the Battle of Lemberg and the Russian advance into Galicia, to prevent Roumania from declaring war upon Austria-Hungary. But on October 10, 1914, King Carol died. By this time it was evident that the war would be long, and its result was more than ever to Roumanian eyes incalculable.

In the spring of 1915 the Germans began to shatter the Russian front, and the immense disasters and recoil of the Russian armies dominated the Roumanian mood and paralysed the disconnected British, French and Russian diplomacy. On the other hand, the attack upon the Dardanelles, the prospect of the fall of Constantinople and of the arrival of a British Fleet in the Black Sea was a counterpoise. All through 1915, while the Russian retreat was continual, the expectation of a British and French victory over Turkey kept Roumania true to her convictions and neutral in the war. She accepted money from both sides, she sold corn and oil to Germany, but she obstructed the passage of German munitions to the Dardanelles and closed no gate decisively upon the Allies. With the failure of the Dardanelles Expedition, with the accession of Bulgaria to the Teutonic cause, with the invasion and ruin of Serbia and the final evacuation of the Gallipoli Peninsula, all the military factors became adverse, and Roumania at the beginning of 1916 stood isolated and encompassed by the Central Empires.

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The Salonica Expedition.

There was however one factor of which Roumania took notice. An allied army based on Salonica faced the Bulgarians along their southern frontier. We have already seen the curious beginnings of this enterprise, and, so far as they are worth recording, the still more curious causes which led its being entrusted to the command of General Sarrail.

Sarrail had arrived at Salonica in

Photo: E.N.A.

SALONICA: A BIRD'S-EYE VIEW.

Salonica, formerly a Turkish seaport, came into the possession of Greece in 1912. The harbour is a very fine one and the city itself, viewed from the sea, is imposing. It rises from the shore in a series of terraces to the citadel at the top. The old city walls are seen to the right of the photograph.

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

GREEK OFFICERS ON THE QUAY AT SALONICA.

The Greek Army in 1914 was an efficient force of well-trained and experienced soldiers. It fought with distinction in the Balkan Wars, its successes when allied with Bulgaria and Serbia against Turkey resulting in the expansion of Greek territory to the extent of some 16,000 square miles. Later, in 1913, Greece gained further territory during her quarrel with Bulgaria. This army might have been at the disposal of the Allies for the attack upon the Dardanelles. The offer was made, but for reasons outlined in the text on page 458 it was declined, and a golden opportunity of making prompt settlement with Turkey was lost.

September, 1915, to find one British and two French divisions in or near the town. The Serbians were retreating in all the cruel severity of the winter before the German - Austro - Bulgarian invasion. Some small French detachments were sent northward up the Vardar Valley; but of course it was already too late for Sarrail or the Allied Powers to give any effective help. Sarrail had neither the force nor the communications to enable him to act effectively.

As the British General Staff had explained carefully to their Government in October, no sufficient force could be spared, or if spared, landed in Salonica in time, or if landed at Salonica, transported and maintained in Serbia. The roads and railways, the wagons and rolling stock which existed could not carry to the north any army large enough seriously to intervene in the tragedy of the Serbian overthrow. At the same time the attitude of King Constantine had become so openly pro-German that there was an obvious danger of Salonica being converted into a hostile town *behind* the French advanced detachments which were based upon it. In these circumstances, Sarrail had recalled his troops hastily to the town of Salonica, determined to keep a hold at any rate on his base: and the remnant of the Serbian army managed in the end to make its escape to the shores of the Adriatic, whence French and Italian warships embarked the indomitable survivors and brought them round to Salonica by sea. Here then in November, 1915, had ended the first futile phase of the Salonica expedition.

The Influence of Lloyd George and Briand.

But this as it had turned out was only to be the beginning of the story. Although Serbia was conquered, the remnants of her army rescued, Bulgaria committed to the side of the Central Powers, and although the effectual co-

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

RATION DUMP ON THE SALONICA FRONT.

This pile of wooden boxes containing food for a part of the comparatively small force operating on the Salonica Front is insignificant when compared with the immense supplies of similar stores which were amassed at various points behind the Western Front and elsewhere. When it is considered that in addition to ration dumps there were also ammunition dumps and stores of military equipment of all kinds, all of which were rapidly depleted and as rapidly replenished, it will be more clearly comprehended why the cost of a modern war mounts to almost fantastic figures.

operation of Greece had become hopeless, the Salonica policy was to continue. At the beginning of 1915 both Lloyd George and Briand had had the same idea of sending a large army to Salonica to influence the Balkans. They had not then had the power to execute their plan while it had great prizes to offer; but when almost all the possible advantages had disappeared these two brilliant men, akin in many ways in temperament, found themselves advancing to controlling positions. They both adhered faithfully to their first conception, and neither seemed to realize how vastly its prospects had been curtailed. Such was their influence upon events that a numerous allied army was, at enormous cost, in defiance of military opinion, and after most of the original political objectives had disappeared, carried or being carried to Salonica.

At the outset the oppositions to developing the Salonica expedition on a far larger scale seemed overwhelming; the majority of the British Government was against the plan; the General Staff were violently adverse; Lord Kitchener threatened several times to resign if it was pressed. Against this combination was Lloyd George. Similar conditions existed on the other side of the Channel; Joffre and the French Grand Quartier Général were adverse to the proposed diversion of forces from the main theatre. Clémenceau was violently hostile, but Briand, adroit, persuasive, and now Prime Minister, had many resources. Joffre's position had been weakened by his defeat in Champagne, and an accommodation was effected between him and the French Cabinet, of which the salient features were that Joffre should have the Salonica army as well as the armies in France under his general command, and that in return Joffre should wholeheartedly support the Salonica project in the councils of the Allies and also with the resources at his disposal. France thus united then threw her whole weight

upon the British Cabinet and finally, aided by Lloyd George, induced their compliance.

The controversies which raged on both sides of the Channel upon the Salonica expedition were silenced by the remarkable fact that it was upon this much abused front that the final collapse of the Central Empires first began. The falling away of Bulgaria, the weakest ally, produced reactions in Germany as demoralizing as the heaviest blows they had sustained upon the Western Front. The Salonica policy, for all its burden upon our shipping and resources, its diversion of troops, its false beacon to Roumania, and its futile operations, was nevertheless largely vindicated by the extremely practical test of results. The consternation of Bulgaria at the defeats of the German armies in France was however at least as potent a factor in her collapse as the actual military pressures to which her own troops were subjected. The reactions were reciprocal; the German defeats undermined Bulgarian resistance; and the Bulgarian surrender pulled out the linchpin of the German combination.

* * * *

Still Not Too Late.

True strategy in 1915 pointed for the Allies to the south-eastern theatre, to the Balkan States, to Constantinople, to the weaker members of the hostile confederacy; and though everything was done at the wrong time, in the wrong way, and at the wrong place, nevertheless the general direction of the pressure was right, and in the long run produced results. There was however one way in which the true strategic direction could have been armed with tactical force.

It must have been a hard thing for William the Conqueror at the Battle of Hastings to call his proud Normans off from the attack, and by feigning a flight down the Hill of Senlac to induce Harold and his army to quit the stockades they had so stubbornly defended. William was not however found unequal to that test, and has in consequence been called the "Conqueror" ever since.

Following this suggestion, the reader will no doubt perceive that the plan of British and Allied war which according to this account would best have served our interests in the year 1916 would have been a surprise attack upon the Dardanelles. Such an operation, if successful, would have been the only parry to a possible German eastward thrust, and the only means of holding Russia and preventing Roumania from being absorbed in the Teutonic combination.

In face of the actual German plans for a great offensive at Verdun, for the withdrawal of all German troops from the Austrian Front, and an Austrian offensive in the Trentino, the forcing of the Dardanelles by Allied Fleets and armies might well have been decisive. If this could have been accomplished by the month of June, Roumania might have been persuaded to march against the Central Powers simultaneously with the Russian offensive under Brusilov; and in this event there can be no doubt that the whole Austrian Front towards the east would have been completely swept away. Moreover, the concentration of such large numbers of allied troops already in existence in the eastern Mediterranean, at Salonica, in Egypt and the Islands, and the immense quantities of shipping and small craft of all kinds which were already on the spot, would have rendered a general descent upon the Gallipoli Peninsula, on the Asiatic shore or at Dedeagatch-Bulair, a thoroughly feasible scheme.

Power of the Unexpected.

A single mental conception would have transformed all the twenty allied divisions, sprawled in defensive or diversive functions, into a vast army crouching, under the cover of perfectly satisfactory explanations, for one swift convergent spring. Assuredly the enemy—Turks and Allies—were absolutely convinced that, dreading the fire that had burned us, we would never molest the Dardanelles again. Within two months of our evacuation they had withdrawn all their troops from the Gallipoli Peninsula, except three divisions, and had distributed them in Palestine, Syria, Mesopotamia, Anatolia and Thrace. The Turkish Army that had so stoutly

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

CAMOUFLAGING A GUN POSITION.

The art of camouflaging, or disguising gun positions, was reduced, as the war progressed, to a fine art. The spotting activities of hostile aircraft forced the gunners of every army to do everything possible to deceive the enemy as to the exact whereabouts of their guns. This applied, in particular, to the heavier guns. The form of camouflage in use here is netting, or other rough material, to which are attached bunches of grass. From the air, unless a tell-tale gun-flash was observed, the position would appear as a rough scrub-covered knoll.

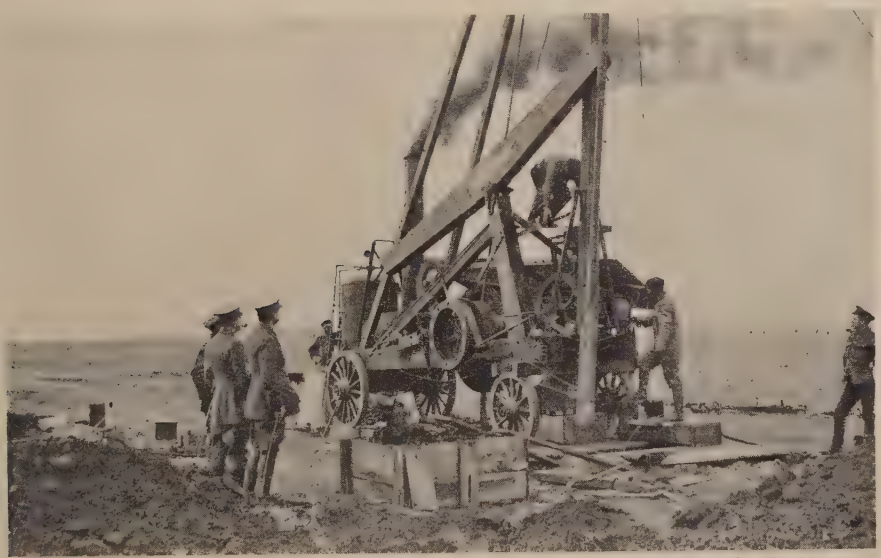


Photo: Imperial War Museum.

ROYAL ENGINEERS BORING FOR WATER.

This photograph, taken on the Salonica Front, shows men of that remarkable branch of the Service, the Royal Engineers, carrying out one of the many jobs that fall to their lot in war. On the Eastern Fronts such as Salonica, Gallipoli, Sinai, Palestine and Mesopotamia, the water problem was always acute. It speaks volumes for the ingenuity and devotion to duty of the R.E. that whereas, though men and horses had at times to have their water supply strictly rationed, it was but rarely that they had none at all.

defended the Peninsula was scattered to every point of the compass, and separated from that fateful spot by long, uncertain, and inefficient railway and road communications.

The British Army that might attack the deserted Peninsula lay within thirty-six hours' steaming of whatever landing places might be selected. The Navy was thoroughly equipped for the task. Not only did we know—to our cost maybe, but also to our experience—every inch of the ground and every yard of the coast, but a situation as favourable as was open in March or April, 1915, had returned. The enemy was once again off his guard, and the choice of time and place had, in this theatre at least, returned to our hands. The very barriers of inhibition that existed in the minds of the British Cabinet, and of which the enemy was clearly conscious, were the prime reason for the attempt.

The more morally impossible a military operation, the better chance it will have of success if it is physically practicable. Surprise—that sovereign talisman of War—springs from the doing of the exact thing the enemy is certain will never be tried. "Whatever happens, they will never do that again. Put yourself in their place, would you?" "No, it is inconceivable." Do it then—if this is the enemy's thought—and do it for that very reason. However, no such audacious scheme crossed the minds of our rulers. They trusted they might never hear the name of Gallipoli again, and yielded themselves with placid hopefulness to the immense frontal attacks which were being prepared in France. It was not until the summer of 1918 that Admiral Keyes—strong in the achievement of Zeebrugge—and Admiral Wemyss installed as First Sea Lord, were able to obtain the authority for a renewed naval forcing of the Dardanelles in the possible campaign of 1919. That was at last too late.

* * * *

Falkenhayn's Memorandum—East or West?

Long and anxious were the reflections of the German High Command. They have been elaborately explained by the person chiefly responsible. During Christmas, 1915, Falkenhayn set himself to write a Memorandum for the eye of the Emperor. He has published it in his Memoirs. The document is not an impressive one and it bears evidence of being dressed to the taste of Falkenhayn's august master, but its argument and its conclusion were certainly clear.

Falkenhayn deprecated but did not seek to veto the Austrian proposal for an attack on Italy. He disapproved of attacks on England in the east: "Victories at Salonica, the Suez Canal or in Mesopotamia can only help us in so far as they intensify the doubts about England's invulnerability which have already been aroused amongst the Mediterranean peoples and in the Mohammedan world. . . . We can in no case expect to do anything of decisive effect in the course of the war, as the advocates of an Alexander march to India or Egypt or an overwhelming blow at Salonica are always hoping. . . ."

He rejected plans for continuing the offensive against Russia: "According to all reports the domestic difficulties of the 'Giant Empire' are multiplying rapidly. Even if we cannot perhaps expect a revolution in the grand style, we are entitled to believe that Russia's internal troubles will compel her to give in within a relatively short period. . . . Unless we are again prepared to put a strain on the troops which is altogether out of proportion—and this is prohibited by the state of our reserves—an offensive with a view to a decision in the East is out of the question for us until April, owing to the weather and the state of the ground. *The rich territory of the Ukraine is the only objective that can be considered.*[1] The communications towards that region are in no way sufficient. It is to be presumed that we should either secure the adhesion of Roumania or make up our minds to fight her: both are impracticable for the moment. A thrust at Petersburg, with its million inhabitants, whom we should have to feed from our own short stocks if the operations were successful, does not promise a decision. An advance on

[1] My italics.

Moscow takes us nowhere. We have not the forces available for any of these undertakings. For all these reasons Russia as an object of our offensive must be considered as excluded." . . .

Falkenhayn then proceeds to examine the western theatre. "In Flanders, as far as the Lorette Ridge, the state of the ground prevents any far-reaching operation until the middle of the spring. South of that point the local Commanders consider that about thirty divisions would be required. The offensive in the northern sector would need the same number. Yet it is impossible for us to concentrate those forces on one point of our front. . . . Moreover, the lessons to be deduced from the failure of our enemies' mass attacks are decisive against any imitation of their battle methods.

"An attempt at a mass break-through, even with an extreme accumulation of men and material, cannot be regarded as holding out prospects of success against a well-armed enemy whose morale is sound and who is not seriously inferior in number. The defender has usually succeeded in closing the gap. This is easy enough for him if he decides to withdraw voluntarily, and it is hardly possible to stop him doing so. The salients thus made, enormously exposed to the effect of flank fire, threaten to become a mere slaughter-house. The technical difficulties of directing and supplying the masses bottled up in them are so great as to seem practically insurmountable.

"We must equally discountenance any attempt to attack a British sector with comparatively inadequate means. We could only approve that course if we could give such an attack an objective within reasonable reach. There is no such objective; our goal would have to be nothing less than to drive the English completely from the Continent and force the French behind the Somme. If that object at least were not attained the attack would have been purposeless. . ."

His Decision.

Having disposed of all these alternatives the General approaches the conclusion to which his reflections had led him: "There remains only France. . . . The strain in France has almost reached breaking-point. . . . . The uncertain method of a mass break-through, in any case beyond our means, is unnecessary. Within our reach, behind the French sector of the Western Front, there are objectives for the retention of which the French General Staff would be compelled to throw in every man they have. If they do so, the forces of France will bleed to death—as there can be no question of a voluntary withdrawal—whether we reach our goal or not. If they do not do so, and we reach our objective, the moral effect on France will be enormous. For an operation limited to a narrow front, Germany will not be compelled to spend herself so completely, for all other fronts are practically drained. She can face with confidence the relief attacks to be expected on these fronts, and indeed hope to have sufficient troops in hand to reply to them with counter-attacks, for she is perfectly free to accelerate or draw out her offensive, to intensify or break it off from time to time as suits her purpose.

"The objectives of which I am speaking now are Belfort and Verdun. The considerations urged above apply to both; yet the preference must be given to Verdun. The French lines at that point are barely 12 miles distant from the German railway communication. Verdun is therefore the most powerful *point d'appui* for an attempt [by the French [1]] with a relatively small expenditure of effort to make the whole German front in France and Belgium untenable. At Christmas," says Falkenhayn, "it was decided to give effect to the views which had crystallized out of this process of reasoning."

Examination of His Policy.

The execution of Falkenhayn's new policy required an almost complete relaxation of the pressure upon Russia. Hindenburg and Ludendorff were informed that no great enterprises against Russia could be set on foot in 1916, and that they could expect no reinforcements. All the German troops

[1] W. S. C.

were withdrawn in the south from the Galician Front, and this theatre, so pregnant at once with menace and advantage, was confided entirely to Austrian hands. At the same time the Austrians were not dissuaded from preparing and developing an offensive against Italy in the Trentino, for which purpose they also withdrew a number of their best troops from their Eastern Front. And thus both north and south the Central Powers turned away from the eastern frontiers and their momentous problems, and leaving Russia to recover behind them and Roumania to brood over the scene with anxious eyes, plunged into desperate adventures in the west.

This was indeed a momentous decision. It involved the complete reversal of the policy by which General von Falkenhayn had in 1915 restored the German situation. Instead of pursuing his advantages against the weaker antagonists, he selected for the great German effort of 1916 the strongest enemy at that enemy's strongest point. That the decision was disastrous has been proved by the event. But it may be contended also that it was wrong. It was based first of all upon an erroneous appreciation of the offensive and defensive conditions on the great battle-fronts in France and upon the mistaken belief that the general war could be brought to an end in 1916 by some strong effort there by one side or the other. Secondly, it took altogether too narrow and too purely military a view of the general position of Germany and her allies.

The vital need for Germany was to break the blockade. Unless she could secure to herself resources far greater than could be found within the frontiers of the quadruple Alliance, the long war, to which the world was now condemned, must end inevitably in her exhaustion

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

DEVASTATION NEAR THE AISNE.

The appalling conditions under which operations were carried on during the winter months of the Great War are aptly conveyed by the pictures on this page and on that opposite. Both photographs show country which before the war was forest land. In both cases the trees have been blown to pieces and the ground is nothing but a shell-pitted swamp.

Photo: Photopress.

AND IN THE YPRES SECTOR.

Here again, in Sanctuary Wood, are the shell-holes, water-logged and treacherous. During the fighting in Belgium and Northern France many a man lost his life by drowning in the often unsuspected depths of holes blown out by the explosion of heavy howitzer shells. For the wounded man making his way wearily and painfully to the rear these pools of evil, stagnant water were often veritable death traps.

and defeat. She had no chance of breaking the blockade at sea. Its efficiency might be impaired by the devices of neutrals, but the vast process of starvation not only in food but in materials indispensable to modern armies was remorselessly and unceasingly at work. The British Fleet towered up in massive strength, and no one seriously doubted what the result of a fought-out battle on blue water would be. Sea Power and Land Power were arrayed against each other, and if Germany could not conquer Britain on the seas, where could she turn?

Only in one direction lay salvation. If she could not break the blockade by sea, she must break it by land. If the oceans were closed, Asia was open. If the west was barred with triple steel, the east lay bare. Only in the east and south-east and in Asia could Germany find the feeding grounds and breathing room—nay, the man power—without which her military strength however impressive was but a wasting security. Only in spreading their frontiers over new enormous regions could the Central Empires make themselves a self-contained and self-sufficing organism, and only by becoming such an organism could they deprive their enemies of the supreme and deadly weapon—Time.

The Need to Win Roumania.

The true and indeed the only attainable political objectives open to Germany in 1916 were the final overthrow of Russia and the winning of Roumania to the side of the Central Empires. These were harmonious aims. Success in the

IN NO MAN'S LAND:

This impressive and poignant scene was photographed by the Canadian War Photographic Staff was taken from the Canadian front-line trenches and shows the debatable land between the is quiet

Photo: Copyright.

CANADIAN SECTOR.

and was shown at an exhibition of Canadian war photographs in London in 1916. The picture opposing lines. Shells are bursting on and over the German support lines, but otherwise all and desolate.

first would go far to achieve the second. Roumania was essential to Germany. "As I now saw quite clearly," writes Ludendorff of the situation in October, 1916, "we should not have been able to exist, much less carry on the war without Roumania's corn and oil. . . ." But if the battered corpse of an invaded and conquered Roumania was thus indispensable at the end of the year, how much more precious would have been Roumania with her resources and her armies as an ally at the beginning.

During 1915 a German convention with Roumania had secured to the Teutonic Powers the vital corn and oil supplies. But Germany in January, 1916, might reasonably look for a far more favourable development. Bulgaria had joined the Central Powers. The Dardanelles were safely shut. Russia was reeling. Roumania was therefore already almost surrounded, and any further collapse of Russia would isolate her completely. If she coveted Transylvania from Hungary, did she not also claim Bessarabia from Russia? A sagacious German policy at this juncture could have offered to Roumania in combination every inducement to join her neighbours, from high rewards to extreme duress.

Breaking the Blockade by Land.

Following upon this it would appear that the true strategic objectives of Germany in 1916 were the Black Sea and the Caspian. These lay within her grasp and required no effort beyond her strength. A continued advance against the south lands of Russia into the Ukraine and towards Odessa would have secured at comparatively little cost sufficient food for the Teutonic peoples. An upward thrust of Turkish armies sustained by German troops and organized by German generals would have conquered the Caucasus.

Fleets and flotillas improvised by German science could easily dominate both the inland seas. The command of these waters would threaten simultaneously every point along their 5,000 miles of coast line, absorbing in negative defence ten Russians for every German employed, and multiplying in an almost unlimited degree the opportunities for further advance. Roumania completely encircled, cut from French and British aid by Bulgaria and Turkey, cut from the Russian armies by an Austro-German march from Lemberg to Odessa, could have had no choice but to join the Central Empires. The skilful employment of fifteen or twenty German divisions animating Austrian and Turkish armies would surely and easily have extended the territories which nourished Germany so as to include by the end of the summer of 1916 the whole of South-Eastern Europe, the Black Sea, the Caucasus and the Caspian. The Austro-German Front against Russia might have stretched from Riga to Astrakhan, with little more expenditure of force than was required to hold the existing eastern line.

At every moment and at every stage in these vast combinations the pressure upon Russia and upon her failing armies would have increased: and at every stage her troops and those of her allies would have been dissipated in vain attempts to wall in the ever-spreading flood in the east, or would have been mown down in the frantic assaults upon the German trenches in France.

And this was itself only a stage in the process of land expansion and strategic menace open to the German military power. From the Caspian once navally commanded, Persia was a cheap and easy prey. There was no need to march large armies like Alexander to the east. Literally a few thousand Germans could have dominated Northern Persia, and eastward still beyond Persia lay Afghanistan and the threat to India. The consequences of such a German policy must have paralysed all British war effort from her Indian Empire. In Egypt, in Mesopotamia, and in India whole armies of British and Indian troops would have been forced to stand idle in apprehension of impending invasion or revolt, while the glory of the German eagles and the sense of approaching change swept far and wide through the peoples of Asia.

Roumania or Verdun.

But from all the prospects so opened out to her in the east Germany was

lured away. The final destruction of Russia, the overawing and conversion of Roumania, the conquest of granary after granary and oilfield after oilfield, the indefinite menace to the British Empire in Asia, with consequent diversion and dissipation of British forces, were all renounced by Falkenhayn in a few meagre sentences. Germany was made to concentrate her whole available offensive effort upon the cluster of wooded hills and permanent defences which constituted the strong fortress of Verdun. One-half the effort, one-quarter the sacrifice, lavished vainly in the attack on Verdun would have overcome the difficulty of the defective communications in "the rich lands of the Ukraine." The Russian armies in the south would have been routed long before they had gained their surprising victories under Brusilov; and Roumania, her 500,000 men and her precious supplies of corn and oil, would have been brought into the war early, not late, and as an ally and not as a foe.

But the school of formula had vanquished the school of fact, the professional bent of mind had overridden the practical; submission to theory had replaced the quest for reality. Attack the strongest at his strongest point, not the weakest at his weakest point, was once again proclaimed the guiding maxim of German military policy.

From the moment when he received the news of the total evacuation of the Gallipoli Peninsula, the opportunity of General von Falkenhayn, Chief of the German General Staff, was to pronounce the word *ROUMANIA*. He pronounced instead the word *VERDUN*.

From a picture by A. Renaudin; Photograph by A. D. Dupont. Picture copyrighted in the U.S.A. and Canada.

VERDUN IN THE DAYS OF PEACE.

A town and first-class fortress on the Meuse, Verdun was destined to witness one of the most ruthless offensives waged on any front during the Great War. Falkenhayn, rightly believing that the French would attach to the defence of Verdun an importance greater than its position in the line warranted, determined to bring against it a hitherto unheard of weight of artillery with which to massacre the French reinforcements as fast as they could be brought up. The text describes how the Germans fared in this enterprise, one of the two great battles in 1916 from the effects of which their army was never fully to recover.

CHAPTER LVII.

VERDUN

The Dismantled Forts—Fact and Sentiment—The Anvil—Falkenhayn's Tactical Conception—The Attitude and Responsibility of the Crown Prince—Colonel Driant, Deputy for Nancy—Galliéni and Joffre—Castelnau's Mission—The Battle Begins—The Composure of General Joffre—Activities of Castelnau and Pétain—The Struggle Prolonged—Falkenhayn Entangled—Cost of a Rigid Defence—Galliéni's Last Act—"Unity of Front"—Genesis of the Somme—Reaction of Verdun upon the Somme Plan—The Revival of Russia—The Fatal Defect—Brusilov's Offensive—The Fruits of Surprise—Consequences—The Price of Verdun.

THE drama of Verdun may perhaps be opened by the visit to the fortress in July, 1915, of a delegation from one of the Army Commissions of the Chamber. The deputies had been disquieted by the rumours they had heard of the insecurity of the region before which lay the army of the German Crown Prince. The delegation were received by General Dubail, commanding the group of armies of the east, and by the Governor of Verdun, General Coutanceau.

The Dismantled Forts.

General Dubail explained that after the experiences of Liège and Namur permanent forts were no longer useful. They could be destroyed with certainty by heavy howitzers and were mere shell traps for their garrisons. The only effective defence of Verdun lay in field troops holding an extended line around the fortress. Following these ideas, for which there was much to say, the forts had been dismantled and their coveted guns, garrisons and stores dispersed among the armies. The Governor, General Coutanceau, had the temerity to express a different opinion. He considered that the forts still had a high value and should play an important part in conjunction with the field defences. General Dubail was so irritated at this intervention of his subordinate and rebuked him in terms of such severity, that the Commission on their return to Paris thought it necessary to appeal to the Minister of War to shield the outspoken Governor from punishment and disgrace. In fact however, after an interval of a few weeks General Coutanceau was removed from the Governorship of Verdun, and his place was taken by General Herr. At the beginning of February, 1916, on the very eve of the attack, the army of which the Verdun troops formed a part was transferred from the command of General Dubail to the centre group under General de Langle de Cary. Thus the responsibility for the neglect to develop to the full the defences of this area was divided and difficult to trace.

* * * *

Fact and Sentiment.

In a military sense, Verdun had no exceptional importance either to the French or to the Germans. Its forts were disarmed; it contained no substantial magazines; it guarded no significant strategic point. It was two hundred and twenty kilometres from Paris, and its capture would not have made any material difference to the safety either of the capital or of the general line. Falkenhayn and Ludendorff both speak of it as a dangerous sally-port against their main railway communications, scarcely twelve miles away. But seeing that only two inferior lines of railway served Verdun, while the German occupied area in its front was fed by no less than fifteen, it should have been easy for the Germans to provide against such a sally. At its highest, the capture of Verdun would

have been a military convenience to the Germans and in a lesser degree an inconvenience to the French.

But then there was the sentiment which attached to Verdun. "It was," says a French historian,[1] "the great fortress proudly confronting its rival Metz, whose name had for centuries not ceased to haunt Germanic imaginations; it was the great advanced citadel of France; the principal bastion of her eastern frontier, whose fall resounding throughout Europe and the whole world would efface for ever the victories of the Marne and Yser."

Photo: Sport & General.

GENERAL DE LANGLE DE CARY.

Commander of the Fourth French Army at the outbreak of the Great War. In February, 1916, after the controversy concerning the utility of the forts at Verdun, responsibility for the defence of this strong point was transferred from General Dubail, the apostle of open field works, to General de Langle de Cary, then commanding the centre group of armies. He is seen here on the left of the photograph with a member of his staff.

The Anvil.

This then was the foundation upon which Falkenhayn's conception of the German attack upon Verdun stood. It was not to be an attempt at a "break through." The assailants were not to be drawn into pockets from which they would be fired at from all sides. They were to fire at the French and assault them continually in positions which French pride would make it impossible to yield. The nineteen German divisions and the massed artillery assigned to the task were to wear out and "bleed white" the French army. Verdun was to become an anvil upon which French military manhood was to be hammered to death by German cannon. The French were to be fastened to fixed positions by sentiment, and battered to pieces there by artillery. Of course this ingenious plan would be frustrated if the French did not lend themselves to it, and if they did not consider themselves bound to make disproportionate sacrifices to retain the particular hills on which stood the empty forts of Verdun.

It is not intended to press this argument too far. Verdun was a trophy. The German challenge had to be met by the whole resources of the French army; but ground should have been sacrificed in the conflict as readily as men, with the sole object of exacting the highest price from the enemy at every stage. A greater manœuvring latitude accorded to the defence would have

[1] Corda: *La Guerre Mondiale*, p. 187.

Photo : Copyright.

COUNTRY TO THE NORTH-WEST OF VERDUN.

A photograph taken from the French lines in April, 1916, during the progress of the battle for Verdun.

rendered the whole episode far less costly to the French army, and would have robbed the plan of General von Falkenhayn of such reasons as it could muster. But the German commander, wrong in so much else, had rightly gauged the psychology of the French nation.

Writing in August, 1916, I tried to penetrate and analyse the probable motives which animated the Germans in their attack on Verdun.[1]

". . . . Suppose your gap is blasted —what then? Are you going to march to Paris through it? What is to happen, if you break the line of an otherwise unbeaten army? Will you really put your head into the hole?"

"No," say Main Headquarters; "we are not so foolish. We are not seeking Verdun. Nor are we seeking to blast a hole. Still less do we intend to march through such a hole. Our aim is quite different. We seek to wear down an army, not to make a gap; to break the heart of a nation, not to break a hole in a line. We have selected Verdun because we think the French will consider themselves bound to defend it at all costs; because we can so dispose our cannon around this apex of their front as to pound and batter the vital positions with superior range and superior metal, and force our enemy to expose division after division upon this anvil to our blows."

[1] *The London Magazine,* published in November, 1916.

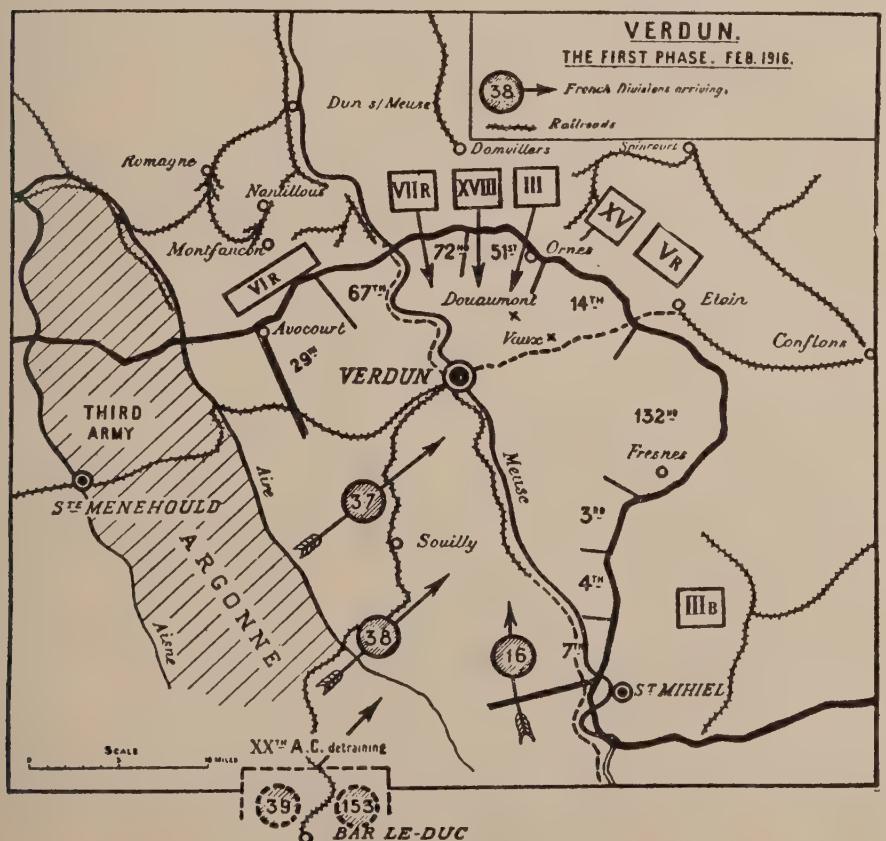
Falkenhayn's Tactical Conception.

The strategic and psychological conceptions which had led Falkenhayn to select Verdun as the point of the German attack became mingled in the tactical sphere with his impressions derived from the success of the Gorlice-Tarnow attack on Russia in the previous year. There a punch followed by a scoop executed on a moderate front, but backed by a blasting concentration of artillery and gas, had led to a general withdrawal of the Russian line; and the process had been repeated again and

again. His plan at Verdun was therefore by this intense punch on a narrow front with high-class troops and unprecedented cannon fire to hammer the French on the anvil of fixed positions, and if successful to rip their front, as a purely subsidiary development, to the right and left. In pursuance of this idea, he allocated to the Crown Prince nearly 2,000 extra guns, including all the latest types, and masses of shells, but added only four army corps to the forces of the Fifth German Army holding the line. He prescribed the exact frontage and scope of the attack and confined it strictly within the limits possible to these modest forces.

The French trench line ran in a half-moon salient five or six thousand yards around the permanent forts of Verdun.[1] This position was cut in two unequal portions by the Meuse River, at this season nearly a kilometre wide. There were therefore the defences of the left bank (the west or the French left); the defences of the right bank (the east or French centre); and farther east (and to the French right) the plain of the Woeuvre and the fortified eastern heights of the Meuse. It was upon the French centre, between the Meuse and the Woeuvre plain, that the intense punch was to be directed. The German High Command believed that if this centre were pierced to a certain depth, the retreat of the two flanks would ensue automatically, or could easily be

[1] See Map on this page.



VERDUN: THE FIRST PHASE, FEBRUARY, 1916.

Sketch map showing the movements of the French and German forces during the opening period of the Battle of Verdun.

procured by further pressure. Their tactical studies of the ground before the war had led them to regard the positions of the left bank, unless and until compromised by the retreat of the French centre, as exceptionally strong and forbidding. All these conclusions and decisions were duly imparted to the Crown Prince and the Fifth Army Staff of which General von Knobelsdorf was the chief.

The Attitude and Responsibility of the Crown Prince.

The Crown Prince has been harshly judged in the passion and propaganda of the war. He has been represented at once as a fop and as a tyrant, as a callow youth and as a Moloch; as an irresponsible passenger and as a commander guilty of gross and disastrous military errors. None of these contradictory alternatives fit the truth.

The German Imperial Princes in command of armies or groups of armies were held in strong control. The Headquarters Staff, main and local, decided and regulated everything, and the function of the ill-starred Heir Apparent was largely to bear the odium for their miscalculations and to receive, during the early years of the war, their ceremonious civilities. Even these civilities became attenuated as the long-drawn conflict deepened.

Nevertheless, the Crown Prince had influence. He had with the All Highest the access of a son to a father. He had the right to express a view, to pose a question, to require an answer from any General, however august. He also had a share in the Emperor's unique point of view. He was a proprietor. Life, limb and fortune were risked by all the combatants in the Great War, but the inheritance to the Imperial throne, turning so nakedly on the general result, exercised from the first days of the war a sobering and concentrating effect upon a hitherto careless mind. It may also be said that no group of German armies was more consistently successful than his; and that there is evidence that his personal influence—whatever it may have been—was often thrown into the right side of the scales.

The Crown Prince did not feel comfortable about the attack at Verdun in 1916. He thought that it would be wiser to finish first with Russia in the east. He had of course a long suppressed eagerness "to lead his tried and trusty troops once more to battle against the enemy, etc." But he was disquieted by Falkenhayn's repeated statements that the French Army was to be "bled white" at Verdun, and he felt no conviction that this would only happen to the French. It might even happen to the House of Hohenzollern. Moreover, on the tactical form of the attack his misgivings were supported or perhaps inspired by General von Knobelsdorf and his Staff. Their view was that the attack, if made at all, should be made on a broader front, comprising simultaneously both sides of the Meuse, and that large reserves should be at hand from the outset to exploit the advantages in the initial surprise.

The Crown Prince sent Knobelsdorf to lay these claims before Falkenhayn. Falkenhayn insisted on his plan. He had framed it in relation to the whole situation as he saw it and he adhered to the smallest detail. There was to be an anvil. There was to be a punch on a narrow front. There was to be an unparalleled artillery, and only just enough infantry to exploit success. They were to proceed step by step, their way forward being blasted at each stage by cannon. Thus, whether Verdun was taken or not, the French army would be ruined and the French nation sickened of war.

It was a simple solution for world-wide problems, but it was Falkenhayn's solution, and he was in supreme control. By his determination and superior authority Knobelsdorf was soon over-persuaded, and the Crown Prince was therefore overruled by the military hierarchy in mechanical unanimity. Such are the facts. While the newspapers of the time and in these days many of the histories have dwelt on the vanity and ruthless pride which prompted the heir to the Imperial throne to drive the manhood of Germany ceaselessly into the fires of Verdun, the truth is different. The Crown Prince, shocked

and stricken by the butchery and opposed to the operation, continuously endeavoured to use such influence as he commanded to bring it to a close; and we have Ludendorff's testimony to his expressions of relief and pleasure when the decision was finally taken.

* * * *

Colonel Driant, Deputy for Nancy—Galliéni and Joffre.

The first warning of the unprepared condition of the Verdun defences reached the French Government through an irregular channel. Colonel Driant, Deputy for Nancy, commanded a group of Chasseur battalions in the advanced lines of Verdun. At the end of November this officer and Member of Parliament came on leave to Paris and requested to be heard by the Army Commission of the Chamber, and on December 1 he exposed to his fellow-deputies the lack of organization and general inadequacy of the defences of the fortress. The Commission confirmed the account given by Colonel Driant, and their report was presented by the Commission to the Minister of War.

The vigilant Galliéni was already possessed of similar statements from other quarters, and on December 16 he wrote to General Joffre. From different sources, he said, came accounts of the organization of the front which showed defects in the state of the defences at certain points, particularly and notably in the region of the Meurthe, and of Toul and Verdun. The network of trenches was not complete as it was on the greater part of the front. Such a situation, if it were true, ran the risk of presenting grave embarrassment. A rupture by the enemy in such circumstances would involve not only General Joffre's own responsibility but that of the whole Government. Recent experience of the war proved superabundantly that the first lines could be forced, but that the resistance of second lines could arrest even a successful attack. He asked for an assurance that on all the points of the front the organization at least of two lines should be designed and developed with all the necessary fortifications — barbed wire, inundations, abatis, etc.

The Commander-in-Chief hastened to reply on December 18 in a letter which holds its place in the records of ruffled officialdom. He asserted in categorical detail that nothing justified the misgivings of the Government. He concluded upon that peculiar professional note of which French military potentates have by no means the monopoly.

"But since these apprehensions are founded upon reports which allege defects in the state of the defences, I request you to communicate these reports to me and to specify their authors. I cannot be party to soldiers placed under my command bringing before the Government, by channels other than the hierarchic channel, complaints or protests concerning the execution of my orders. Neither does it become me to defend myself against vague imputations, the source of which I do not know. The mere fact that the Government encourages communications of this kind, whether from mobilized Members of Parliament or directly or indirectly from officers serving on the front, is calculated to disturb profoundly the spirit of discipline in the Army. The soldiers who write know that the Government weighs their advice against that of their Chiefs. The authority of these Chiefs is prejudiced. The morale of all suffers from this discredit.

"I could not lend myself to the continuation of this state of things. I require the whole-hearted confidence of the Government. If the Government trusts me, it can neither encourage nor tolerate practices which diminish that moral authority of my office, without which I cannot continue to bear the responsibility." [1]

Evidently Colonel and Deputy Driant

[1] Mais puisque ces craintes sont fondées sur des comptes rendus vous signalant des défectuosités dans la mise en état de défense, je vous demande de me communiquer ces comptes rendus et de me désigner leurs auteurs.

Je ne puis admettre, en effet, que des militaires placés sous mes ordres fassent parvenir au gouvernement par d'autres voies que la voie hiérarchique des plaintes ou des réclamations au sujet de l'exécution de mes ordres.

Il ne me convient pas davantage de me

[*Continued on page* 818.]

in his trenches before Verdun was in danger from more quarters than one.

It is asserted that General Galliéni had no mind to put up with this sort of thing, and that he framed a rejoinder both commanding and abrupt. But colleagues intervened with soothing processes. The Minister for War was marshalling with much assent the heads of a broad indictment of the Grand Quartier Général. He was persuaded to reduce this particular incident to modest proportions. At any rate, in the end he signed a soft reply. Joffre and G.Q.G. had vindicated their authority. The Ministry for War and the presumptuous and meddling deputies had been put in their places. But there were still the facts to be reckoned with—and the Germans.

Castelnau's Mission.

Evidence continued to accumulate, and gradually a certain misgiving began to mingle with the assurance of Chantilly. Their own officers sent to examine the Verdun defences threw, in discreet terms, doubts upon the confident assertions with which the Commander-in-Chief had replied to the Minister for War. The troops on the spot and their Commanders were convinced they were soon to be attacked. The defences were still unsatisfactory. The Parliamentary Commissions buzzed incessantly. Finally, on January 20, General de Castelnau, the Major-General of the armies, and General Joffre's virtual Second-in-Command and potential successor, immediately on his return from Salonica, visited Verdun in person. He found much to complain of and gave various directions to remedy the neglects. A regiment of engineers was hurried to the scene; the necessary materials for fortification were provided; communications were improved and work begun. But time was now very short. The German masses were gathering fast. The enormous magazines swelled each day. Their immense concentration of heavy artillery perfected itself.

Quite early in January the 2nd Bureau (Intelligence) began to indicate Verdun as the point at which a German attack would be delivered. A constant increase of batteries and troops in the regions north of Montfaucon and on both sides of the Meuse, the presence of "storm" divisions near Hattonchâtel, and the arrival of Austrian heavy howitzers were definitely reported. General Dupont, head of the 2nd Bureau, declared with conviction that Verdun was to be the object of a heavy and immediate attack.

The French Operations Staff, to judge by Pierrefeu's excellent account,[1] seemed to have abandoned their scepticism slowly. Certainly there seemed many parts of the French line more attractive to a hostile attack. But by the middle of February, those who doubted that a great German offensive was soon to break upon Verdun were few. The majority of the staff were at last convinced that the hour was near and all—so we are told—were eager for the day and confident of its results. No one, however, had the least idea what the mechanical force of the onslaught would be.

* * * *

The Battle Begins.

At four o'clock in the morning of February 21 the explosion of a fourteen-inch shell in the Archbishop's Palace at Verdun gave signal of battle, and after a brief but most powerful bombardment

défendre contre des imputations vagues dont j'ignore la source.

Le seul fait que le gouvernement accueille des communications de ce genre provenant, soit de parlementaires mobilisés, soit directement ou indirectement d'officiers servant sur le front, est de nature à jeter un trouble profond dans l'esprit de discipline de l'armée. Les militaires qui écrivent savent que le gouvernement fait état de leurs correspondances vis-à-vis de leurs chefs. L'autorité de ceux-ci est atteinte; le moral de tous souffre de ce discrédit.

Je ne saurais me prêter à la continuation de cet état de choses. J'ai besoin de la confiance entière du gouvernement. S'il me l'accorde, il ne peut ni encourager ni tolérer des pratiques qui diminuent l'autorité morale de mon commandement et faute de laquelle je ne pourrai plus continuer à en assumer la responsabilité.

[1] "G.Q.G.," by Jean de Pierrefeu. This officer was employed throughout the war to draft the official communiqués of the French Headquarters. He had the best opportunities of knowing exactly what took place. He is a writer of extraordinary force and distinction.

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

THE GERMAN CROWN PRINCE WITH HIS MEN.

Responsibility for the slaughter at Verdun has frequently, in ill-informed quarters, been fixed upon the Crown Prince of Germany. It is true that he commanded the Army Group before Verdun. Nominally, therefore, he was the butcher sending thousands of his soldiers to certain death. The Verdun plan, however, was Falkenhayn's; its execution was carried out by the staff. For the operation the Crown Prince had distaste; when it was finally abandoned his relief was profound.

three German Army Corps advanced upon the apex of the French front, their right hand on the Meuse. The troops in the forward positions attacked were, except towards the eastern flank, driven backwards towards the fortress line. The battle was continued on the 22nd and the 23rd. The brave Colonel Driant was killed in the woodlands covering the retreat of his Chasseurs. The line was reformed on the ridges near Douaumont: but the German six-inch artillery, dragged forward by tractors, hurled upon the new position so terrific a fire-storm that the French division chiefly concerned collapsed entirely. During the afternoon of the 24th, both the General commanding the Verdun area and the Commander of the Group of Armies in which it lay (Langle de Cary), telegraphed to Chantilly, advising an immediate withdrawal to the left bank of the Meuse, and the consequent abandonment of the town and fortress of Verdun.

The Composure of General Joffre.

General Joffre was by no means disconcerted by these unexpected and untoward events. He persevered throughout that admirable serenity for which he was noted, which no doubt would have equally distinguished him on the flaming crests of Douaumont. He assented on the 22nd to the movement of the Ist and XXth Corps, and to a request to Sir Douglas Haig to relieve in the line with British troops the Tenth French Army to reinforce Verdun. For the rest he remained in Olympian tranquillity, inspiring by his unaffected calm, regular meals and peaceful slumbers confidence in all about him.

A less detached view was necessarily taken by Castelnau. The Second French Army had been relieved in

the line some time before by the increasing British forces. The army was in the best order, rested and trained. Its staff had not been affected by the new French rule obliging every Staff Officer to do a spell of duty with the fighting troops. Its Commander, Pétain, had gained already in the war one of the highest reputations. On the evening of February 24, General de Castelnau presented himself to General Joffre and proposed to move the whole of the Second French Army to Verdun. The Commander-in-Chief assented to this. At eleven o'clock on the same night Castelnau, having received further reports of the most serious character, requested by telephone permission to proceed personally to Verdun with plenary powers.

Pierrefeu has described the incident which followed. The Commander-in-Chief was already asleep. Following his almost invariable custom he had retired to rest at ten o'clock. The orderly officer on duty declared it impossible to disturb him. At first Castelnau submitted. But a few minutes later a further message from Verdun foreshadowing the immediate evacuation of the whole of the right bank of the Meuse arrived, and on this Castelnau would brook no further obstruction. He went in person to the villa Poiret in which the great soldier was reposing. Upon the express order of the Major-General an aide-de-camp took the responsibility of knocking at the formidable double-locked door. The supreme Chief, after perusing the telegrams, gave at once the authorization for General de Castelnau to proceed with full powers, declared there must be no retreat, and then returned to his rest.

Activities of Castelnau and Pétain.

Castelnau started forthwith a little

Photo: Newspaper Illustrations.

FRENCH SHELL DUMP AT VERDUN.

As soon as it became apparent to the French that the battle of Verdun was likely to be decided by sheer weight of metal, everything possible was done to augment the reserve of ammunition. Thousands of shells were stacked at points shielded from the German artillery, to be brought forward to the guns as required. Here is shown a small corner of one of the great dumps near Verdun.

after midnight. At Avize, Headquarters of Langle de Cary and the centre group of armies, he quelled the pessimism that existed, and from there telephoned to Verdun announcing his impending arrival and calling upon General Herr "on the order of the Commander-in-Chief not to yield ground but to defend it step by step," and warning him that if this order was not executed, "the consequences would be most grave for him (Herr)." By daylight on the 25th Castelnau reached Verdun and found himself confronted with the tragic scenes of confusion and disorder which haunt the immediate rear of a defeated battle-front. All accounts agree that the influence and authority of Castelnau on the 25th reanimated the defence and for the moment restored the situation. Wherever he went, decision and order followed him. He reiterated the command at all costs to hold the heights of the Meuse and to stop the enemy on the right bank. The XXth and Ist Army Corps now arriving on the scene were thrown into the battle with this intention. While taking these emergency measures, Castelnau had already telegraphed to Pétain ordering him to take command, not only of the Second French Army, which was now moving, but also of all the troops in the fortified region of Verdun.

Photo: Keystone.

"THEY SHALL NOT PASS!"

Two French soldiers lie here in a shell crater at Verdun. They have defended their positions to the last, and if the Germans have advanced beyond this point it is because the defenders are no more. It was in this spirit, true to Falkenhayn's belief, that the French stood before Verdun. They died in thousands, but the Germans did not pass.

The Struggle Prolonged.

On the morning of the 26th Pétain received from Castelnau the direction of the battle, which he continued to conduct, while at the same time mastering the local situation. The neglect of the field and permanent defences of a fortress which it was decided to defend to the death, now bequeathed a cruel legacy to the French troops. In advance of the permanent forts there were neither continuous lines of trenches nor the efficient organization of strong points. Telephone systems and communication trenches were scarce or non-existent. The forts themselves were all empty or dismantled. Even their machine guns and cupolas had been extracted and their flanking batteries disarmed. All these deficiencies had now to be repaired in full conflict and under tremendous fire.

Besides the direction of the battle and the organization of his forces and rapidly growing artillery, Pétain took a

number of general decisions. Four successive lines of defence were immediately set in hand. In full accord with the views of the much-chastised General Coutanceau, Pétain directed the immediate reoccupation and re-arming of all the forts. To each he assigned a garrison with fourteen days' food and water, and solemn orders never to capitulate. The immense value of the large subterranean galleries of these forts, in which a whole battalion could live in absolute security till the moment of counter-attack, was now to be proved. Lastly, the new commander instituted the marvellous system of motor-lorries between Verdun and Bar le Duc. No less than three thousand of these passed up and down this road every twenty-four hours, and conveyed each week during seven months of conflict an average of 90,000 men and 50,000 tons of material. Along this "Sacred Way," as it was rightly called, no less than sixty-six divisions of the French Army were to pass on their journey to the anvil and the furnace fires.

* * * *

By the end of February the first German onslaught had been stemmed. Large armies were on both sides grappling with each other round the fortress, ever-increasing streams of reinforcements and munitions flowed from all France and Germany towards the conflict, and ever-increasing trains of wounded ebbed swiftly from it. It had become a trial of strength and military honour between Germany and France. Blood was up and heads were down. Vain had it been for Falkenhayn to write at Christmas: Germany will be "perfectly free to accelerate or draw out her offensive; to intensify or break it off from time to time as suits her purpose." His own professional and official existence was now engaged. The wine had been drawn and the cup must be drained. The French and German armies continued accordingly to tear each other to pieces with the utmost fury, and the power of the German artillery inflicted grievous losses day by day on the now more numerous French.

Falkenhayn Entangled.

When the Germans had attacked on February 21, they had, in accordance with Falkenhayn's plan, used only the three Army Corps of their centre, and three others had stood idle on the two flanks. It can scarcely be doubted that had the whole assaulting forces been thrown in at once, the position of the French, already so critical, could not at the outset have been maintained. However, on March 6 the three flanking Army Corps joined in the battle, and a new series of sanguinary engagements was fought during the whole of March and April for the possession mainly of the hill called "Le Mort Homme" on the left bank of the Meuse, and for the Côte du Poivre on the right. But the Germans achieved no success comparable to that of their opening. The conditions of the conflict had become more equal. Closely locked and battling in the huge crater-fields and under the same steel storm, German and French infantry fell together by scores of thousands. By the end of April nearly a quarter of a million French and Germans had been killed or wounded in the fatal area, though influencing in no decisive way the balance of the World War.

To the war of slaughter and battles was added that of propaganda and communiqués. In this the French had largely the advantage. They did not cease to proclaim day after day the enormous German losses which attended every assault. As the Germans were obviously storming entrenchments and forts, the world at large was prepared to believe that they must be making sacrifices far greater than those of the French. "Up till March," says Ludendorff, "the impression was that Verdun was a German victory," but thereafter opinion changed. Certainly during April and May Allies and neutrals were alike persuaded that Germany had experienced a profound disappointment in her attack on Verdun, and had squandered thereon the flower of her armies.

Cost of a Rigid Defence.

I myself shared the common impression that the German losses must be

Photo: Copyright.

GERMAN PRISONERS AT VERDUN.

The scene after a French assault upon the German position south-east of Fort Douaumont. The French soldiers in the foreground stand in the trench from which the attack was launched. The Germans have been disarmed and sent back from the captured trench beyond the skyline.

"WE OCCUPIED THE CRATER": FRENCH TROOPS ADVANCING

This vivid drawing, in which French infantry are seen advancing to occupy the enormous
the state of dazed helplessness into which the victims of such a weapon are thrown. Of the
retain the unshaken determination necessary

From the drawing by I. Simont.

AFTER A MINE EXPLOSION ON THE VERDUN FRONT.

cavity created by the explosion of a mine driven under the German lines, conveys admirably
defending Germans many have been killed, more have been wounded, and few are left who still
for a resolute defence of their position.

heavier than those of the French. All accounts however showed that the strain upon the French Army was enormous. They were compelled to defend all sorts of positions, good, bad and indifferent, and to fight every inch of the ground with constant counter-attacks under a merciless artillery; and it was clear that they were conducting the defence in the most profuse manner. "The French," I wrote at the time, "suffered more than the defence need suffer by their valiant and obstinate retention of particular positions. Meeting an artillery attack is like catching a cricket ball. Shock is dissipated by drawing back the hands. A little 'give,' a little suppleness, and the violence of impact is vastly reduced. Yet, notwithstanding the obstinate ardour and glorious passion for mastery of the French, the German losses at Verdun greatly exceeded theirs."[1]

It is with surprise which will perhaps be shared by others that I have learned the true facts. During the defensive phase from February to June the French Army suffered at Verdun the loss of no fewer than 179,000 men (apart from officers) killed, missing or prisoners, and 263,000 wounded: a frightful total of 442,000; or with officers probably 460,000. The Germans on the other hand, although the attackers, used their man power so much less and their artillery so much more that their loss, including officers, did not exceed 72,000 killed, missing and prisoners, and 206,000 wounded: a total of 278,000. From the totals of both sides there should be deducted the usual one-eighth for casualties on other parts of the front where French and Germans faced each other. But this in no way alters the broad fact that the French sacrificed in defending Verdun more than three men to every two attacking Germans. To this extent therefore the tactical and psychological conceptions underlying Falkenhayn's scheme were vindicated.

Galliéni's Last Act.

Ever since the opening phase of the struggle of Verdun the personal position of General Joffre had deteriorated. The neglect to prepare the field defences of Verdun, the disarming of its forts, the proved want of information of the Commander-in-Chief and his Headquarters Staff upon this grave matter, the fact that it had been left to the Parliamentary Commission to raise the alarm, the obstinacy with which this alarm had been received and resented, were facts known throughout Government and Opposition circles in Paris. The respective parts played by Joffre and Castelnau in the first intense crisis of the Verdun situation were also widely comprehended. In the whole of this episode little credit could be discovered either for the Commander-in-Chief or for the gigantic organization of the Grand Quartier Général sourly described as "Chantilly."

Consideration of all these facts led General Galliéni to a series of conclusions and resolves. First, he wished to bring Joffre to Paris, from which centre he would exercise that general command over all the French armies, whether in France or the Orient, which had been entrusted to him. Secondly, he wished to place General de Castelnau at the head of the armies in France. Thirdly, he proposed to diminish in certain respects the undue powers which Chantilly had engrossed to itself, and to restore to the Ministry of War the administrative functions of which it had to a large extent been deprived. Galliéni laid proposals in this sense, though without actually naming Castelnau, before the Council of Ministers on March 7, 1916. France now had the opportunity of securing for her armies and for her Allies military leadership in the field of the first order, without at the same time losing any advantage which could be derived from the world prestige of Joffre.

The Cabinet was greatly alarmed. They feared a political and ministerial crisis, as well as a crisis in the Supreme Command—all during the height of the great battles raging around Verdun. Briand intervened with dexterous argument, but General Galliéni was resolved. Stricken by an illness which compelled an early and grave operation, he had laid what he considered his testament and the last remaining service he could

[1] *London Magazine.* Written in August, published November, 1916.

render France before his colleagues. When his advice was not accepted, he immediately resigned. For several days his resignation was kept a secret. Then it was explained on grounds of health, and the charge of the War Ministry was taken temporarily by the Minister of Marine. Finally, when his resolves were seen to be unshakable, a colourless but inoffensive successor was discovered in the person of General Roques, an intimate friend of Joffre and actually suggested by him. Thus did General Joffre receive a renewed lease of power sufficient to enable him to add to the dearly bought laurels of Verdun the still more costly trophies of the Somme.

Galliéni was now to quit the scene for ever. Within a fortnight of his resignation he withdrew to a private hospital for an operation—at his age of the greatest danger—but which, if successful, meant a swift restoration of activity and health. From the effects of this operation he expired on May 27. To his memory and record not only his countrymen, but also their Allies, who profited by his genius, sagacity and virtue, and might have profited far more, should not fail to do justice.

* * * *

"Unity of Front."

After the disasters of 1915 an earnest effort had been made by the British, French and Russian Governments to concert their action for 1916. No sooner had Briand attained the Premiership than he used a phrase which pithily expressed the first great and obvious need of the Allies—"Unity of front." Unity of front did not mean unity of command. That idea, although it had dawned on many minds, was not yet within the bounds of possibility. Unity of front or "only one front," meant that the whole great circle of fire and steel within which the Allies were gripping the Central Powers should be treated and organized as if it were the line of a single army or a single nation; that everything planned on one part of the front should be related to everything planned on every other part of the front; that instead of a succession of disconnected offensives, a combined and simultaneous effort should be made by the three great Allies to overpower and beat down the barriers of hostile resistance. In these broad and sound conceptions Mr. Asquith, Mr. Lloyd George, Lord Kitchener, Monsieur Briand, General Joffre, General Cadorna, the Czar and General Alexeieff, all four Governments and all four General Staffs, were in full accord.

In pursuance and execution of this conception it had been decided to make a vast combined onslaught upon Germany and Austria, both in the east and in the west, during the summer months. The Russians could not be ready till June, nor the British till July. It was therefore agreed that a waiting policy should as far as possible be followed during the first six months of the year, while the Russians were re-equipping and increasing their armies, while the new British armies were perfecting their training, and while enormous masses of shells and guns were being accumulated. To these immense labours all four great nations henceforth committed themselves.

Genesis of the Somme.

It was further agreed that the Russians should endeavour to hold the Germans as far as possible on the northern part of the Eastern Front, and that the main Russian attack should be launched in Galicia in the southern theatre. At the same time, or in close relation to this, it was decided that a tremendous offensive, exceeding in scale anything ever previously conceived, should be delivered by the British and French, hand in hand, astride of the Somme (*à cheval sur la Somme*).

It was intended to attempt to break through on a front of seventy kilometres: the English to the north of the Somme on the twenty-five kilometres from Hébuterne to Maricourt; and the French astride the Somme, but mainly to the south of it, on a forty-five kilometre front from Maricourt right down to Lassigny. Two entire British armies, the Third and Fourth, under Allenby and Rawlinson, and comprising from twenty-five to

thirty divisions, constituted the British attack; and three French armies, the Second, the Sixth and the Third, comprising thirty-nine divisions, were to be placed under the command of Foch for the French sector. The whole of these five armies, aggregating over one and a half million men and supported by four or five thousand guns, were thus to be hurled upon the Germans at a moment when it was hoped they and their Austrian allies would already be heavily and critically engaged on the Eastern Frontiers. The original scheme for this stupendous battle was outlined in December, 1915, at the first Conference of the Allied General Staffs at Chantilly, and its final shape was determined at a second Conference on February 14.

Reaction of Verdun upon the Somme Plan.

The ink was hardly dry on these conventions when the cannon of Verdun began to thunder, and the Germans were seen advancing successfully upon the neglected defences of that fortress. It is certainly arguable that the French would have been wise to have played with the Germans around Verdun, economising their forces as much as possible, selling ground at a high price in German blood wherever necessary, and endeavouring to lead their enemies into a pocket or other unfavourable position. In this way they might have inflicted upon the Germans very heavy losses without risking much themselves, and as we now know they would certainly have baffled Falkenhayn's plan of wearing out the French Army and beating it to pieces upon the anvil. By the end of June the Germans might thus have exhausted the greater part of their offensive effort, advancing perhaps a dozen miles over ground of no decisive strategic significance, while all the time the French would have been accumulating gigantic forces for an overwhelming blow upon the Somme.

However, other counsels—or shall we call them passions?—prevailed, and the whole French nation and army hurled itself into the struggle around Verdun. This decision not only wore out the French reserves and consumed the offensive strength of their army, but it greatly diminished the potential weight of the British attack which was in preparation. Already before the German attack opened, Sir Douglas Haig had taken over an additional sector of the French front, liberating, as we have seen, the Second French Army which was thus enabled to restore the situation at Verdun. As soon as the Battle of Verdun had begun, Joffre requested Haig to take over a fresh sector, and this was accordingly effected in the early days of March, thus liberating the whole of the Tenth French Army. Thus the number of British divisions resting and training for the great battle was at the outset sensibly diminished.

As the Verdun conflict prolonged itself and deepened all through March, April and May, the inroads upon the fighting strength and disposable surplus of the French Army became increasingly grave. And as July approached the thirty-nine French divisions of the original scheme had shrunk to an available eighteen. This greatly diminished the front of the battle and the weight behind the blow. The numbers available were reduced by at least one-third, and the front to be attacked must be contracted from seventy to about forty-five kilometres. Whereas in the original conception the main onslaught would have been made by the French with the British co-operating in great strength as a smaller army, these rôles had now been reversed by the force of events. The main effort must be made by the British, and it was the French who would co-operate to the best of their ability in a secondary rôle.

* * * *

The Revival of Russia.

While the eyes of the world were riveted on the soul-stirring frenzy of Verdun, and while the ponderous preparations for the Allied counter-stroke on the Somme were being completed, great events were at explosion-point in the East. To those who knew that Russia was recovering her strength with every day, with every hour that passed, who knew of the marshalling of her

inexhaustible manhood, and the ever-multiplying and broadening streams of munitions of war which were flowing towards her, the German attack on Verdun had come with the sense of indescribable relief. Russia had been brought very low in the preceding autumn, before the rearguards of the winter closed down on her torn and depleted line. But mortal injury had been warded off. Her armies had been extricated, her front was maintained, and now behind it "the whole of Russia" was labouring to re-equip and reconstitute her power.

Few episodes of the Great War are more impressive than the resuscitation, re-equipment and renewed giant effort of Russia in 1916. It was the last glorious exertion of the Czar and the Russian people for victory before both were to sink into the abyss of ruin and horror. By the summer of 1916 Russia, who eighteen months before had been almost disarmed, who during 1915 had sustained an unbroken series of frightful defeats, had actually managed, by her own efforts and the resources of her Allies, to place in the field—organized, armed and equipped—sixty Army Corps in place of the thirty-five with which she had begun the war. The Trans-Siberian Railway had been doubled over a distance of 6,000 kilometres, as far east as Lake Baikal. A new railway 1,400 kilometres long, built through the depth of winter at the cost of unnumbered lives, linked Petrograd with the perennially ice-free waters of the Murman coast. And by both these channels munitions from the rising factories of Britain, France and Japan, or procured by British credit from the United States, were pouring into Russia in broadening streams. The domestic production of every form of war material had simultaneously been multiplied many fold.

The Fatal Defect.

It was however true that the new Russian armies, though more numerous and better supplied with munitions than ever before, suffered from one fatal deficiency which no Allied assistance could repair. The lack of educated men, men who at least could read and write, and of trained officers and sergeants woefully diminished the effectiveness of her enormous masses. Numbers, brawn, cannon and shells, the skill of great commanders, the bravery of patriotic troops, were to lose two-thirds of their power for want, not of the higher military science, but of Board School education; for want of a hundred thousand human beings capable of thinking for themselves and acting with reasonable efficiency in all the minor and subordinate functions on which every vast organization—most of all the organization of modern war—depends. The mighty limbs of the giant were armed, the conceptions of his brain were clear, his heart was still true, but the nerves which could transform resolve and design into action were but partially developed or non-existent. This defect, irremediable at the time, fatal in its results, in no way detracts from the merit or the marvel of the Russian achievement, which will for ever stand as the supreme monument and memorial of the Empire founded by Peter the Great.

At the beginning of the summer the Russian front, stretching 1,200 kilometres from the Baltic to the Roumanian frontier, was held by three main groups of armies, the whole aggregating upwards of 134 divisions: the northern group under the veteran Kouropatkine; the centre group (between the Pinsk and the Pripet) under Evert; the southern group (to the south of the Pripet) under Brusilov. Against this array the Central Empires marshalled the German armies of Hindenberg and Ludendorff in the north, of Prince Leopold of Bavaria and General von Linsingen opposite the centre and southern centre, and the three Austrian armies of the Archduke Frederick in the south. The drain of Verdun and the temptations of the Trentino had drawn or diverted from the Eastern Front both reserves and reinforcements, and practically all the heavy artillery. And in the whole of the sector south of the Pripet, comprising all Galicia and the Bukovina, not a German division remained to sustain the armies of the Austrian Archduke against the forces of Brusilov.

Photo: Record Press.

GENERAL BRUSILOV.

General Brusilov, one of the ablest of the Czarist army chiefs, has already figured frequently in this account. In August, 1914, he commanded the Eighth Russian Army, but two years later, in 1916, was at the head of the southern group of armies. The offensive launched by Brusilov in June, 1916, dealt a staggering blow to the Austrians and caused the Germans many misgivings. When later, in 1917, the Russian troubles began, Brusilov was one of those who advised the Czar to abdicate.

Brusilov's Offensive.

The original scheme had contemplated July 1 as the date of the general Allied attack, both in the west and in the east. But the cries of Italy from the Trentino and the obvious strain under which the French were living at Verdun led to requests being made to the Czar to intervene if possible at an earlier date. Accordingly on June 4, Brusilov, after a thirty-hours' bombardment, set his armies of over a million men in motion, and advanced in a general attack on the 350-kilometre front between the Pripet and the Roumanian frontier.

The results were equally astonishing to victors and vanquished, to friend and foe.

It may well be that the very antedating of the attack imparted to it an element of surprise that a month later would have been lacking. Certainly the Austrians were entirely unprepared for the weight, vigour and enormous extent of the assault. The long loose lines in the east in no way reproduced the conditions of the Western Front. The great concentrations of artillery, the intricate system of fortification, the continuous zones of machine-gun fire, the network of roads and railways feeding the front and enabling reserves to be thrown in thousands and tens of thousands in a few hours upon any threatened point were entirely lacking in the east. Moreover, the Austrian armies contained large numbers of Czech troops fighting under duress for a cause they did not cherish and an Empire whose downfall they desired.

The Fruits of Surprise.

No one was more surprised than Falkenhayn.

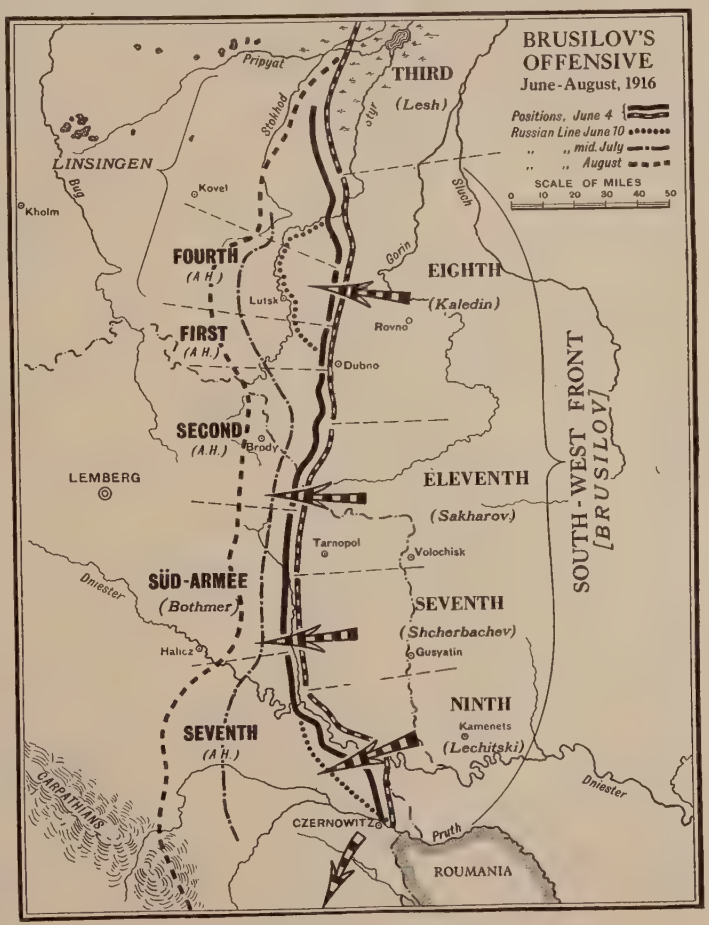
"After the failure,"[1] he wrote, "of the March offensive in Lithuania and Courland, the Russian front had remained absolutely inactive. . . . There was no reason whatever to doubt that

[1] *General Headquarters 1914-1916 and its Critical Decisions:* General von Falkenhayn, pp. 244-247.

the front was equal to any attack on it by the forces opposing it at the moment. . . . General Conrad von Hötzendorf . . . declared that a Russian attack in Galicia could not be undertaken with any prospect of success in less than from four to six weeks from the time when we should have learnt that it was coming. This period at least would be required for the concentration of the Russian forces, which must be a necessary preliminary thereto. . . . However, before any indication of a movement of this sort had been noticed, to say nothing of announced, a most urgent call for assistance from our ally reached German G.H.Q. on the 5th of June.

"The Russians, under the command of General Brusilov, had on the previous day attacked almost the entire front, from the Styr-Bend, near Kolki, below Lutsk, right to the Roumanian borders. After a relatively short artillery preparation they had got up from their trenches and simply marched forward. Only in a few places had they even taken the trouble to form attacking groups by concentrating their reserves. It was a matter not simply of an attack in the true sense of the word, but rather of a big scale of reconnaissance. . . .

"A 'reconnaissance' like Brusilov's was only possible, of course, if the General had decisive reason for holding a low opinion of his enemy's power of resistance. And on this point he made no miscalculation. His attack met with splendid success, both in Volhynia



BRUSILOV'S OFFENSIVE, JUNE-AUGUST, 1916.

Sketch map showing the extent of Brusilov's advance during the months of June, July and August, 1916. This offensive broke the resistance of the Austro-Hungarian Armies over a front of 195 miles. It did more. It convinced Germany that after all Hindenburg's warning, "Russia is only scotched, not slain," had been justified, and this new orientation of the German viewpoint was one of the factors which hastened the eclipse of Falkenhayn and the ascendency to supreme power of H.

and in the Bukovina. East of Lutsk the Austro-Hungarian front was clean broken through, and in less than two days a yawning gap fully thirty miles wide had been made in it. The part of the 4th Austro-Hungarian Army, which was in line here, melted away into miserable remnants.

"Things went no better with the 7th Austro-Hungarian Army in the Bukovina. It flowed back along its entire front, and it was impossible to judge at the moment whether and when it could be brought to a halt again. . . .

"We were therefore faced with a situation which had fundamentally changed. A wholesale failure of this kind had certainly not entered into the calculations of the Chief of the General Staff (himself). He had considered it impossible."

Consequences.

All along the front the Russian armies marched over the Austrian lines or through wide breaches in them. In the north the army of Kaledine advanced in three days on a 70-kilometre front no less than 50 kilometres, taking Lutsk. In the south the army of Letchitsky, forcing successively the lines of the Dneister and the Pruth, invested Czernovitch after an advance of 60 kilometres. The German front under Linsingen wherever attacked maintained itself unbroken or withdrew in good order in consequence of adjacent Austrian retirements. But within a week of the beginning of the offensive the Austrians had lost 100,000 prisoners, and before the end of the month their losses in killed, wounded, dispersed and prisoners amounted to nearly three-quarters of a million men. Czernovitch and practically the whole of the Bukovina had been reconquered, and the Russian troops again stood on the slopes of the Carpathians. The scale of the victory and the losses of the defeated in men, material and territory were the greatest which the war in the east had yet produced.

The Price of Verdun.

The Austrian offensive on the Trentino was instantly paralysed, and eight divisions were recalled and hurried to the shattered Eastern Front. Although the Battle of Verdun was at its height and Falkenhayn deeply committed to procuring at least a moral decision there, and while he could watch each week the storm clouds gathering denser and darker on the Somme, he found himself forced to withdraw eight German divisions from France to repair those dykes he had so improvidently neglected in the east, or at any rate to limit the deluge now pouring forward impetuously in so many directions. The Hindenburg-Ludendorff armies, which had successfully sustained the subsidiary attacks delivered by the Russians upon their front, were also called upon to contribute large reinforcements for the south; and an immense German effort was made to close the breaches and re-establish the Southern Front. By the end of June the failure of the Austro-German campaign of 1916, which had opened with such high prospects, was apparent. The Trentino offensive was hamstrung; Verdun was in Ludendorff's words "an open wasting sore";[1] and a disaster of the first magnitude had been suffered in that very portion of the Eastern Front which had offered the most fruitful prospects to Teutonic initiative. But this was not the end. The main struggle of the year was about to begin in the west, and Roumania, convulsed with excitement at the arrival of victorious Russian armies before her very gates, loomed up black with the menace of impending war.

[1] *War Memories,* Vol. I, p. 267.

CHAPTER LVIII

JUTLAND: THE PRELIMINARIES

"A thousand years scarce serve to form a State;
An hour may lay it in the dust."

A Battle or an Encounter—Risks of Forcing a Battle—Strategic Consequences of British Victory and Defeat—Unequal Stakes—Sir John Jellicoe—Under-water Dangers—Extreme Precautions—Jellicoe's Letter of October 14, 1914—The Admiralty Reply—Changing Conditions—Admiralty Intelligence—The Rival Fleets—The Grand Fleet at Sea—"Enemy in Sight"—Delay of the 5th Battle Squadron—Beatty's Decision—Hipper's Trap—The Battle-Cruiser Action—The Immortal Marine—The Crisis Surmounted—Intervention of the 5th Battle Squadron—The High Sea Fleet in Sight—The Run to the North—The Ordeal of the 5th Battle Squadron.

THERE are profound differences between a battle where both sides wish for a full trial of strength and skill, and a battle where one side has no intention of fighting to a finish, and seeks only to retire without disadvantage or dishonour from an unequal and undesired combat. The problems before the Commanders, the conditions of the conflict itself, are widely different in a fleeting encounter—no matter how large its scale—from those of a main trial of strength.

A Battle or an Encounter.

In an encounter between forces obviously unequal, the object of the weaker is to escape, and that of the stronger to catch and destroy them. Many of the tactical processes and manœuvres appropriate to a battle where both sides throw their whole might into the scale and continue at death-grips till the climax is reached and victory declares itself are not adapted to a situation in which keeping contact is the task of the stronger and evasion the duty of the weaker.

This is especially true of the preliminaries; the mode of approach, the deployment of the fleet, the development of the fire, the methods of meeting or parrying the attack of torpedo craft, would naturally be modified according to the view taken of the intentions of the enemy. If he were expected to seek a fight to a finish, there would be no need for hurry. There would be every reason to economize loss in the earlier stages and make every ship and gun play its maximum part in a supreme crisis. If on the other hand the enemy was certain to make off as soon as he saw himself in the presence of very superior forces, it would be necessary for the stronger fleet to run greater risks if it was determined to force a battle. Not only the light forces and the fast heavy ships would be thrown forward to attack, but the battle fleet itself would be driven at a speed which would leave the slowest squadrons and the slowest ships tailing away behind. Thus the pursuing squadrons would not come into action simultaneously but successively.

Risks of Forcing a Battle.

Moreover, modern inventions give new advantages to a retreating fleet. It may entice its enemy across minefields through which perhaps it alone knows the channels, or into a carefully prepared ambuscade of submarines. It can throw out mines behind it. It can fire torpedoes across the course of a pursuing fleet, and itself remain outside torpedo range. From these and other technical causes there can be no doubt that the task of forcing a battle against the enemy's desire involves a far higher degree of risk to the stronger fleet than

would arise in a trial of strength willingly accepted or sought for by both sides. In studying the naval encounter of Jutland, the first question upon which it is necessary to form an opinion is what extra degree of risk, beyond the risk of a pitched battle, the British Fleet was justified in incurring in the hopes of bringing the Germans to action and destroying them. This question cannot be decided without reference to the general strategic situation on the seas.

If the German Fleet had been decisively defeated on May 31, 1916, in battle off Jutland, very great reliefs and advantages would have been gained by the Allies. The psychological effect upon the German nation cannot be estimated, but might conceivably have been profound. The elimination of the German Battle Fleet would have been an important easement to Great Britain, enabling men and material required by the Admiralty for the Grand Fleet to be diverted for the support of the army. It would have brought the entry of the Baltic into immediate practical possibility. Whether the presence of the British Squadrons in the Baltic during the winter of 1916 and the spring of 1917 would have prevented the Russian Revolution is a speculative question, but one which cannot be overlooked.

Strategic Consequences of British Victory and Defeat.

The reactions of a great defeat at sea upon the U-boat attack of 1917, which the Germans were actively preparing, are diverse. On the one hand the disappearance of most of the German battleships might have led to a greater concentration of skilled men and resources upon the development of the U-boat campaign. On the other hand the liberation of the Grand Fleet flotillas and the increased sense of mastery at sea might well have led the Admiralty to more aggressive action against the German river mouths and to an earlier frustration of the U-boat attack.

These important advantages must however be compared with the consequences to Britain and her Allies which would immediately have followed from a decisive British defeat. The trade and food-supply of the British islands would have been paralysed. Our armies on the Continent would have been cut from their base by superior naval force. All the transportation of the Allies would have been jeopardized and hampered. The United States could not have intervened in the war. Starvation and invasion would have descended upon the British people. Ruin utter and final would have overwhelmed the Allied cause.

Unequal Stakes.

The great disparity of the results at stake in a battle between the British and German navies can never be excluded from our thoughts. In a pitched battle fought to a conclusion on British terms between the British and German navies our preponderance was always sufficient to make victory reasonably probable, and in the spring of 1916 so great as to have made it certain. No such assurance could be felt in the earlier days at any rate, about the results of a piecemeal pursuing engagement against a retreating enemy. If that enemy succeeded in drawing part of our Fleet into a trap of mines or submarines, and eight or nine of the most powerful ships were blown up, the rest might have been defeated by the gunfire of the German Fleet before the whole strength of the British line of battle could have reached the scene. This as we know was always the German dream : but there would certainly be no excuse for a Commander to take risks of this character with the British Fleet at a time when the situation on sea was entirely favourable to us. Neither would there be any defence for a British Admiralty which endeavoured to put pressure upon their Admiral to try to achieve some spectacular result against his better judgment and by overstraining risks when the prizes on either side were so unequal.

To be able to carry on all business on salt water in every part of the world without appreciable let or hindrance, to move armies, to feed nations, to nourish commerce in the teeth of war, imply the possession of the command of the sea. If these are the tests, that priceless sovereignty was ours already.

Photo: Alfieri.

ON THE *IRON DUKE.*

An informal photograph taken on board Sir John Jellicoe's flagship. The Commander-in-Chief is seen stepping upon the forward bridge.

We had the upper hand; we had the advantage; time—so it then seemed, so in the end it proved—was on our side. We were under no compulsion to fight a naval battle except under conditions which made victory morally certain and serious defeat, as far as human vision goes, impossible. A British Admiralissimo cannot be blamed for making these grave and solid reasons the basis of his thought and the foundation from which all his decisions should spring.

Sir John Jellicoe.

In the tense naval controversy upon Jutland the keenest minds in the Navy have sifted every scrap of evidence. Every minute has been measured. The speed, the course, the position of every ship great or small, at every period in the operation, have been scrutinized. The information in the possession of every Admiral in each phase has been examined, weighed, canvassed. The dominant school of naval thought and policy are severe critics of Sir John Jellicoe. They disclaim all personal grounds or motives; they affirm that the tradition and future of the British Navy join in demanding that a different doctrine, other methods and above all another spirit must animate our captains at sea, if ever and whenever the Navy is once again at war. They declare that such an affirmation is more important to the public than the feeling of individuals, the decorous maintenance of appearances, the preservation of a superficial harmony, or the respect which may rightly be claimed by a Commander-in-Chief who, over the major portion of the war, discharged an immense and indeed inestimable responsibility.

Sir John Jellicoe was in experience and administrative capacity unquestionably superior to any British Admiral.

Photo: Cribb.

GUNS OF THE FLAGSHIP.

The Grand Fleet at sea in line ahead. This photograph, taken on the deck of the *Iron Duke*, shows two of her armoured turrets. Battleships of this class carried ten 13·5-inch, twelve 6-inch and four 3-pounder guns, together with four torpedo tubes. The *Iron Duke* class embraced, in addition to the flagship, *Marlborough*, *Benbow* and *Emperor*.

Photo: Cribb.

DESTROYERS LAYING A SMOKE SCREEN.

The smoke screen as developed during the Great War became a recognised feature of operations both on land and sea. Smoke proved its value on many occasions, screening ships or troops during movements carried out within sight and range of the enemy. On land, smoke was created by means of special smoke shells, or when the wind was favourable by a line of pots containing smoke-producing chemicals. In the case of destroyers smoke was projected from special burners on the afterdeck or from the funnels by the injection therein of chemical agents.

He knew every aspect and detail of his profession. Afloat or at the Admiralty his intellect, energy, and efficiency won equal confidence from those he served and those he led. Moreover, he was a fine sea officer, capable of handling in the most difficult circumstances of weather and navigation the immense Fleet with which he was entrusted. He had served on active service in more than one campaign with courage and distinction. Before the war he was marked out above all others for the supreme command. When at its outbreak he assumed this great duty, his appointment was acclaimed alike by the nation and the Navy. Nearly two years of the full strain of the war had only enhanced the confidence and affection with which he was regarded by his officers and men. In judging his discharge of his task we must consider first his knowledge and point of view; secondly, the special conditions of the war; and thirdly, the spirit which should impel the Royal Navy.

Under-water Dangers.

The standpoint of the Commander-in-Chief of the British Grand Fleet was unique. His responsibilities were on a different scale from all others. It might fall to him as to no other man—Sovereign, Statesman, Admiral or General—to issue orders which in the space of *two or three hours* might nakedly decide who won the war. The destruction of the British Battle Fleet was final. Jellicoe was the only man on either side who could lose the war in an afternoon.

First and foremost, last and dominating, in the mind of the Commander-

in-Chief stood the determination not to hazard the Battle Fleet. The risk of under-water damage by torpedo and mine, and the consequent destruction of British battleship superiority, lay heavy upon him. It far outweighed all considerations of the results on either side of gunfire. It was the main preoccupation of Admiralty thought before the war. From the opening of hostilities the spectacle of great vessels vanishing in a few moments as the result of an under-water explosion constantly deepened the impression.

Alone among naval authorities of the highest order Sir Reginald Custance had maintained the contrary view, and had ceaselessly laboured to correct what he conceived to be the exaggerated importance attached to the Whitehead torpedo. Again and again I have heard him contend that the torpedo would play only a very unimportant part in a great sea battle, and that the issue would be decided by a combination of gunfire and manœuvre. The results of Jutland seem to vindicate this unfashionable opinion. For twelve hours the main fleets of Britain and Germany were at sea in close contact with one another both by day and by night, amid torpedo flotillas of the highest strength and quality numbered by scores, and only three large ships out of over a hundred exposed to the menace were seriously damaged by the torpedo. The purely passive rôle enjoined upon the British destroyers during the night may partially explain this result. It was certainly at variance with the pre-war expectations of most of the leading naval authorities in England.

Extreme Precautions.

The safety and overwhelming strength of the Grand Fleet was Jellicoe's all-embracing aim. Its strength must be continually augmented. Every service ancillary to the Battle Fleet must be continually developed on the largest scale and to the highest efficiency. Every vessel that the northern harbours could contain must be placed at his disposal. With this object the Commander-in-Chief in his official letters to the Admiralty and by every other channel open to him continually dwelt upon the weakness and deficiencies of the force at his disposal, and at the same time magnified the power of the enemy. This habit of mind had been acquired during many years of struggle for money with peace-time Governments. It had now become ingrained in his nature. We have already seen evidences of this cautious and far from sanguine mood.[1]

The enemy, according to his view, would be more numerous than the Admiralty Intelligence Department admitted. Their best ships would be found re-armed with much heavier guns. The speed of these vessels would turn out to be greater than we knew. Almost certainly they had some astonishing surprises in store.

"The Germans," he had written to Lord Fisher on December 4, 1914, "would have eight flotillas comprising eighty-eight torpedo boat destroyers, all of which would certainly be ready at the selected moment. They had five torpedoes each: total 440 torpedoes—*unless I can strike at them first.*" He then argued that he might fall as low as 32, or even 28, destroyers. "You know," he added, "the difficulty and objections to turning away from the enemy in a Fleet action: but with such a menace I am bound to do it, unless my own torpedo boat destroyers can stop or neutralise the movement."

At the date which this story has now reached he was convinced that the 10,000 yards correctly assigned by the Admiralty Intelligence Department as the extreme range of the German torpedo was too little: 15,000 yards must be the margin of safety on which he should rely. Even in 1917 at the end of his time at the Admiralty as First Sea Lord, when a large part of the American Navy was serving with our own and when the strength of the Allied Fleets was at least four times that of their antagonists, he is still found seriously disquieted at his relative strength in battle-cruisers. It is obvious that there are limits beyond which this outlook ceases to contribute to the gaining of victory in war. But this does not affect the main argument.

[1] Page 418.

Jellicoe's Letter of October 14, 1914.

All Jellicoe's thought was rightly centred upon the naval battle which he would some day have to fight. On October 14, 1914, he addressed to the Admiralty a letter which reveals his deepest conviction and his consistent intentions. From this extensive quotation is necessary.

". . . . The Germans have shown that they rely to a very great extent on submarines, mines and torpedoes, and there can be no doubt whatever that they will endeavour to make the fullest use of these weapons in a fleet action, especially since they possess an actual superiority over us in these particular directions. It therefore becomes necessary to consider our own tactical methods in relation to these forms of attack. . . .

" The German submarines, if worked as is expected with the battle fleet, can be used in one of two ways :—

(*a*) With the cruisers, or possibly with destroyers;

(*b*) With the battle fleet.

" In the first case the submarines would probably be led by the cruisers to a position favourable for attacking our battle fleet as it advanced to deploy, and in the second case they might be kept in a position in rear, or to the flank, of the enemy's battle fleet, which would move in the direction required to draw our own Fleet into contact with the submarines.

" The first move at (*a*) should be defeated by our own cruisers, provided we have a sufficient number present, as they should be able to force the enemy's cruisers to action at a speed which would interfere with submarine tactics. . . .

" The second move (*b*) can be countered by judicious handling of our battle fleet, but may, and probably will, involve a refusal to comply with the enemy's tactics by moving in the invited direction. If, for instance, the enemy battle fleet were to turn away from an advancing fleet, I should assume that the intention was to lead us over mines and submarines, and should decline to be so drawn.

" I desire particularly to draw the attention of their Lordships to this point, since it may be deemed a refusal of battle, and, indeed, might possibly result in failure to bring the enemy to action as soon as is expected and hoped.

" Such a result would be absolutely repugnant to the feelings of all British Naval Officers and men, but with new and untried methods of warfare new tactics must be devised to meet them.

" I feel that such tactics, if not understood, may bring odium upon me, but so long as I have the confidence of their Lordships, I intend to pursue what is, in my considered opinion, the proper course to defeat and annihilate the enemy's battle fleet, without regard to uninstructed opinion or criticism.

" The situation is a difficult one. It is quite within the bounds of possibility that half of our battle fleet might be disabled by under-water attack before the guns opened fire at all, if a false step is made, and I feel that I must constantly bear in mind the great probability of such attack and be prepared tactically to prevent its success.

" The safeguard against submarines will consist in moving the battle fleet at very high speed to a flank before deployment takes place or the gun action commences.

" This will take us off the ground on which the enemy desires to fight, but it may, of course, result in his refusal to follow me. . . .

" The object of this letter is to place my views before their Lordships, and to direct their attention to the alterations in preconceived ideas of battle tactics which are forced upon us by the anticipated appearance in a fleet action of submarines and minelayers. . . ."

The Admiralty Reply.

Lord Fisher, Sir Arthur Wilson, and the Chief of the Naval Staff, then Admiral Sturdee, all considered fully this communication, which was of course only one of a regular stream of reports, despatches and private letters from the Commander-in-Chief. They had no doubt what answer should be sent. They advised me that Sir John

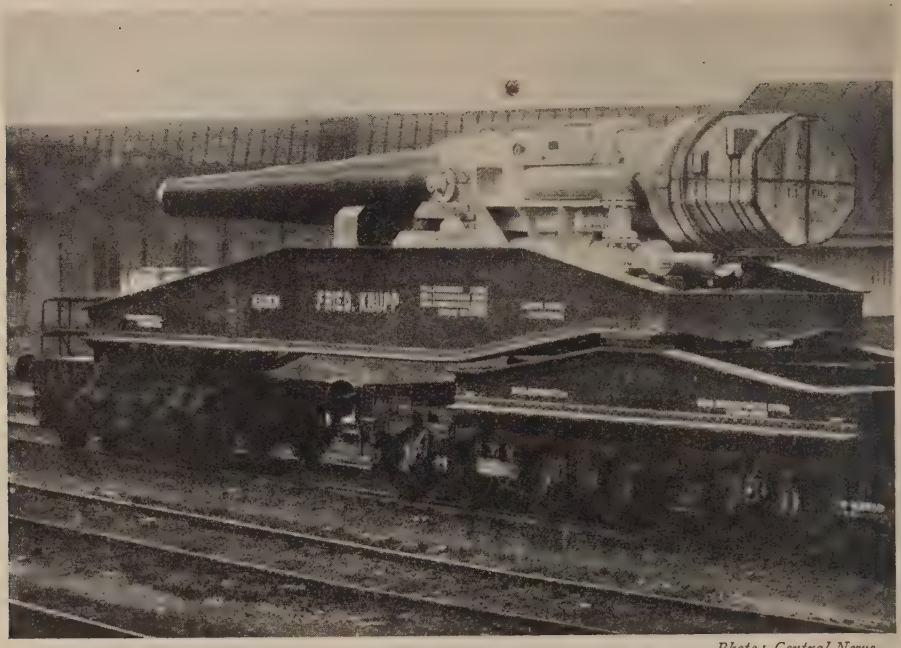


Photo: Central News.

A KRUPP NAVAL GUN.

Krupps of Essen, the great German engineering firm, were responsible for the manufacture of a large proportion of the finest armaments supplied to the German fighting services. Originally engaged in manufacturing purely industrial products, Krupps, about the middle of the nineteenth century, turned their attention to the construction of guns, and later of armour plate. This photograph was taken early in the war, and shows a Krupp naval gun leaving the works.

Jellicoe's statement should receive the general approval of the Board of Admiralty. I agreed fully with their advice. An answer in the contrary sense was obviously impossible.

To tell the Commander-in-Chief of the British Fleet, in the strategic situation which then existed, that even if he suspected the German Fleet were retiring to lead him into a trap of mines and submarines, he should nevertheless follow directly after them, and that if he failed to bring them to battle by manœuvring against his better judgment, no matter what the risk, he would be held blameworthy, would have been madness. The fullest possible latitude of manœuvre, the strongest assurances of personal confidence, were the indefeasible right of any officer in his great situation. Moreover, in October, 1914, our margins of superiority were at their minimum. A plurality of only six or seven Dreadnoughts could be counted on with certainty. We had never met the enemy's great ships in battle. No one could say with certainty to what degree of excellence their gunnery or torpedo practice had attained, or whether their projectiles or their tactics contained some utterly unexpected feature. There was certainly no reason in this first phase of the naval war for seeking a battle except on the best conditions.

I take the fullest responsibility for approving at this date the answer proposed to me by the First Sea Lord, Sir Arthur Wilson, and the Chief of the Staff. If I had not agreed with it, I should not have allowed it to pass unchallenged. But I was far from sharing the Commander-in-Chief's impressions upon the relative strength and quality of the British and German Fleets. I always believed that the British line of battle could fight the Germans ship for ship, and should never decline an encounter on those terms. I

always regarded every addition to equality on our side as a precautionary advantage, not necessary to the gaining of victory, but justified by the far greater stake which a naval battle involved to Britain than to Germany. These views appeared to be vindicated three months later when on January 24, 1915, Admiral Beatty with five battle-cruisers met Admiral Hipper with four. On the morrow of that action, January 26, I wrote to Sir John Jellicoe as follows :—

"The action on Sunday bears out all I have thought of the relative British and German strength. It is clear that at five to four they have no thought but flight, and that a battle fought out on this margin could have only one ending. The immense power of the 13·5-inch gun is clearly decisive on the minds of the enemy, as well as on the progress of the action. I should not feel the slightest anxiety at the idea of your engaging with equality. Still I think it would be bad management on our part if your superiority was not much nearer six to four than five to four, even under the worst conditions."

And to the Prime Minister, January 24, 1915, 3.45 p.m. :—

"This action gives us a good line for judging the results of a general battle. It may be roughly said that we should probably fight six to four at the worst, whereas to-day was five to four."

Changing Conditions.

In the great episode which has now to be described the British superiority was not five to four, nor six to four; it was at least two to one. Sir John Jellicoe is fully justified in pointing to his letter of October 14 as a proof that his conduct in the stress of action was in accord with what he had long purposed in cold blood, and with a general tactical policy which he had already laid before the Board of Admiralty. But I do not accept on behalf of the Board of Admiralty of 1914 any responsibility for the actual conduct by the Commander-in-Chief of an operation which took place eighteen months later in conditions of relative strength different from those which existed in October, 1914, and, as will be seen as this account proceeds, in tactical circumstances entirely different from those which were contemplated by him in his letter. A perception that a decisive battle is not a necessity in a particular situation, and ought not to be

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

IN A BATTLESHIP'S BOILER ROOM.

The conditions during a naval action impose a considerable strain upon every officer and man of a ship's company. In the case of those whose duty lies in the gun turrets or who are otherwise engaged in the actual fighting, this is lessened by the thrill of battle. They can see what is going on. The case of the engine and boiler-room staff is harder. Down in the bowels of the ship these men have to work under arduous conditions. They know little of the progress of the action and are liable to be blown into the air or sent to the bottom without warning or chance of escape.

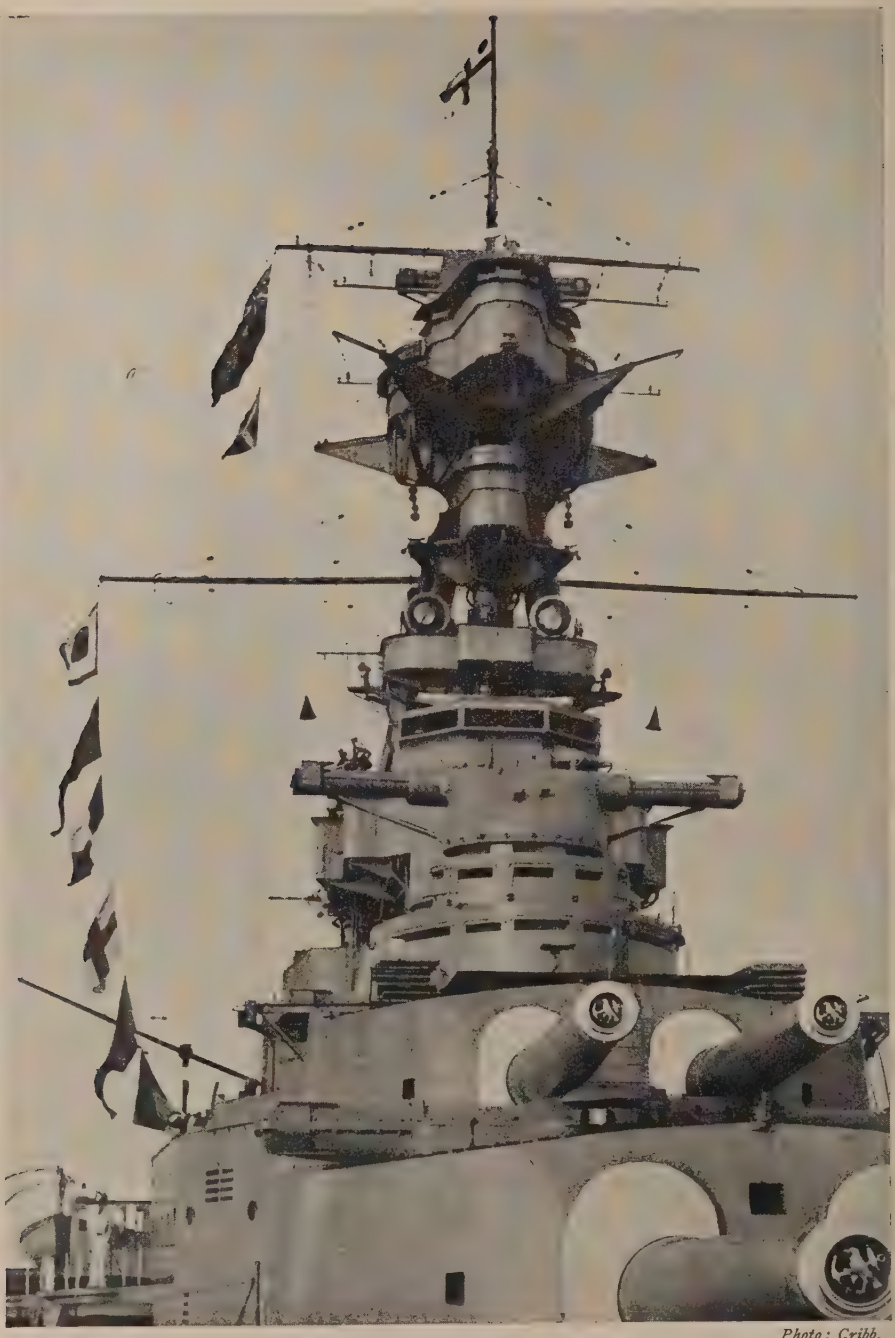


Photo: Cribb.

A SIGNAL FROM THE FLAGSHIP.

In the Royal Navy a flagship is the vessel on which an admiral is accommodated, from which he flies his distinctive flag and from which his orders are communicated to the other ships under his command. Orders may be sent out by a variety of methods, including flags, wireless, semaphore and lamps. During action by daylight the flag method is that usually adopted.

purchased at a heavy risk, should not engender a defensive habit of mind or scheme of tactics.

After these preliminary observations the story may be told in its simplest form, with pauses to examine the issues involved at the crucial moments.

* * * *

Admiralty Intelligence.

I have already recorded the events which secured for the Admiralty the incomparable advantage of reading the plans and orders of the enemy before they were executed. Without the cryptographers' department there would have been no Battle of Jutland. But for that department, the whole course of the naval war would have been different. The British Fleet could not have remained continuously at sea without speedily wearing down its men and machinery. Unless it had remained almost continuously at sea, the Germans would have been able to bombard two or three times a month all our East Coast towns. The simplest measurements on the chart will show that their battle-cruisers and other fast vessels could have reached our shores, inflicted an injury, and returned each time safely, or at least without superior attack, to their own home bases. Such a state of affairs would not necessarily have altered the final course of the war. The nation would have been forced to realize that the ruin of its East Coast towns was as much their part of the trial and burden as the destruction of so many provinces to France. After national resentment had expended itself in the removal of one or more Governments or Boards of Admiralty, a resolute people would have faced the facts with which they were confronted, would indeed have derived from them a new vigour of resistance.

But it so chanced that they were spared this particular ordeal. The secret signal-books of the German Navy fell into the hands of the Russians in the Baltic when the light cruiser *Magdeburg* was sunk in October, 1914, and were conveyed to London. These signal-books and the charts connected with them were subjected to a study in Whitehall in which self-effacing industry and imaginative genius reached their highest degree. By the aid of these books and the deductions drawn from their use, the Admiralty acquired the power of reading a proportion of the German wireless messages.

Well as was the secret kept, the coincidence of events aroused suspicion in the German mind. They knew the British squadrons could not always be at sea; and yet often when a German raid was launched, there at the interception point, or very near it, were found important British naval forces. They therefore redoubled the precaution of their codes. Moreover, they had themselves pierced to some extent the British codes, and had actually established at Neumünster a station for transmitting to their Fleet intercepted British messages. Nevertheless, during the central period of the war at any rate the Admiralty were capable of presenting to the Fleet a stream of valuable information.

The Naval Staff discovered in the last week of May, 1916, peculiar symptoms of impending activity in the German Fleet. The Intelligence had from other sources reported the appointment of Admiral Scheer to the chief command. This officer was reputed at the time to be the advocate of an aggressive war policy at sea. He had espoused an unlimited submarine campaign. He was the nominee of Tirpitz the Bold. The cautious and even timid tactics adopted by the German Navy under the direct orders of the Emperor ever since Beatty had broken into the Heligoland Bight at the end of August, 1914, were now to be abandoned. Admiral Scheer planned offensive action against the English coast for the purpose of drawing the British Fleet out over prepared ambuscades of submarines, and then if Fortune was favourable fighting that weakened Fleet, or better still a detached division of it, a decisive battle for the command of the seas. The imminence of an important operation was deduced by the Admiralty from the whole body of their intelligence.

At five o'clock on May 30 the Admiralty informed the Fleet that there

were indications of the Germans putting to sea. The Fleet, which had been previously ordered to raise steam, was directed to concentrate " eastward of the Long Forties " (about 60 miles east of the Scottish coast) ready for eventualities.

The Rival Fleets.

The two Fleets that put to sea in the evening of May 30, 1916, constituted the culminating manifestation of naval force in the history of the world. But tremendous as was the power of the German Fleet, it could not compare with the British in numbers, speed or gun power. The British marshalled 28 Dreadnought battleships and 9 battle-cruisers against Admiral Scheer's 16 Dreadnoughts and 5 battle-cruisers. In addition the Germans had 6 pre-Dreadnought ships of the Deutschland class, whose slow speed and poor armament made them a source of anxiety to the German Commander. The speed of the British Fleet was decidedly superior. Its slowest battleship could steam 20 knots, while the 5th Battle Squadron, comprising four *Queen Elizabeths*, the strongest and swiftest battleships afloat, was capable of steaming 24 to 25 knots. The fastest German battleship could only steam 21 knots, while the 6 Deutschlands reduced the combined maximum speed of the Battle Fleet to 16 knots.

Still greater was the British superiority in gun fire. Sir John Jellicoe's battleships and battle-cruisers mounted 272 heavy guns against 200 German. But this superiority in numbers was magnified by an enormous superiority in size: 48 British 15-inch, 10 14-inch, 142 13·5-inch, and 144 12-inch guns were matched against 144 German 12-inch and 100 11-inch, making a total British broadside of 396,700 lbs. against a German of 189,958.

The torpedo strength of the two fleets, including vessels of every class, was numerically almost equal. The British mounted 382 21-inch and 75 18-inch torpedo tubes; the Germans 362 19·7-inch and 107 17·7-inch The smaller short-ranged class of torpedoes on either side were hardly likely to be serviceable in a daylight action; and the British 21-inch were slightly superior to the German 19·7-inch in range and in speed. A clear advantage even in this arm therefore rested with the British.

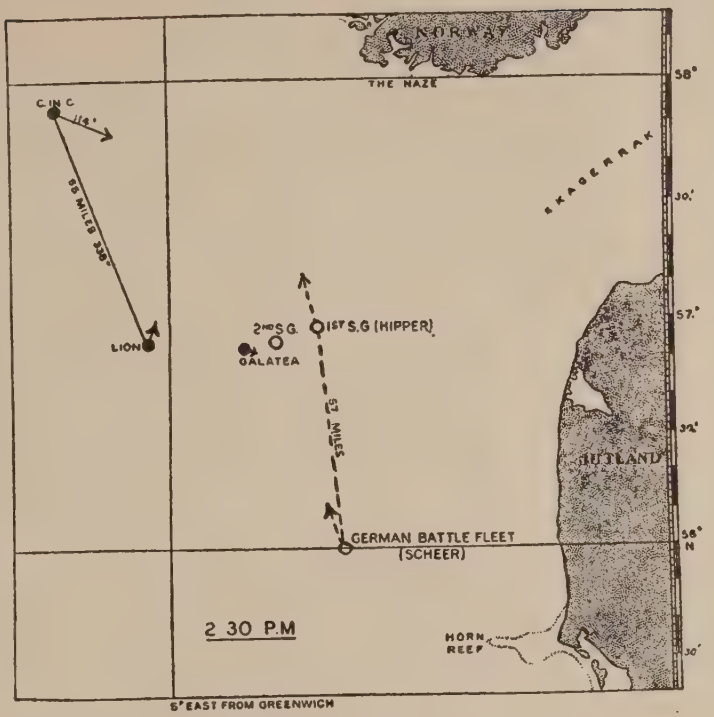
The British preponderance in capital ships was fully maintained in cruisers and destroyers. The British had 31 cruisers at sea, of which eight were the most powerful armoured cruisers of the pre-Dreadnought era; the Germans had 11. On the long-expected day of battle Sir John Jellicoe, although not provided with the cruisers and destroyers of the Harwich force, could muster 85 destroyers to the German 72. As in the case of the larger ships, the numerical superiorities alike in cruisers and in destroyers were enhanced by a great additional strength in gun power in every class, and a large advantage in the speed of the cruisers and in the size of the destroyers. Inferiority in any important arm or factor cannot be discerned at any point in the British array.

The Grand Fleet at Sea.

In consequence of the Admiralty orders, Sir John Jellicoe concentrated from Scapa Flow and Cromarty 24 Dreadnought battleships, 3 battle-cruisers, 3 cruiser squadrons, and 3 destroyer flotillas in the " Long Forties " on the morning of May 31. He had sent Admiral Beatty from the Forth about 65 miles ahead of him with 6 battle-cruisers, 2 light cruiser squadrons, 2 flotillas, and — massive addition — 4 *Queen Elizabeths*. In this formation both were to steam towards the Heligoland Bight till 2 p.m. when, if nothing was seen, Beatty was to come back into sight of the Battle Fleet, which would turn eastward for a further sweep towards the Horn Reef before returning home.

The distance of 65 miles between the main Fleet and its powerful scouting forces has been criticised as excessive. It precluded visual contact between the two portions of the Fleet, and impeded the harmonious combination in the all-important preliminary phases of a great battle. If Beatty, arriving at his rendezvous, found the enemy there or thereabouts, Jellicoe would be out of tactical relation and too

far off to force a battle. This disposition had however been used several times before; and Beatty with his fast powerful ships was quite capable of acting independently. Both Admirals had been out so often on these sweeps that though all precautions were observed neither, on the skeleton information available, had any particular expectation of encountering the enemy.



THE POSITION AT 2.30 P.M., MAY 31, 1916.

Chart showing the relative positions of the British and German naval forces shortly after the British light cruiser *Galatea* sighted the enemy.

"Enemy in Sight."

The day was bright and calm, and as the morning wore away such hopes as they had indulged gradually departed. The last gleam was finally extinguished by a signal from the Admiralty at 12.35 p.m. stating that directionals (i.e. directional wireless) placed the enemy flagship in the Jade at 11.10 a.m. Both Admirals tarried on their course to examine suspicious trawlers, and both were a few miles short of their prescribed positions and out of their reckoning when the hour for the battle-cruisers to turn northwards and close the Battle Fleet approached.[1] Admiral Beatty had already made the signal for an almost complete turn about, and at 2.15 p.m. all his heavy ships had obeyed it. His cruiser screen was in process of turning on to the new direction when the light cruiser *Galatea* saw a steamer about eight miles off apparently stopped and molested by two strange vessels. At 2.20 she signalled: "Enemy in sight. Two cruisers probably hostile bearing south-east, course unknown." The full situation is exposed on the plan reproduced on this page. The strange vessels were two of the leading torpedo boats of the German Second Scouting Group. All the British light cruisers began spontaneously to draw towards the *Galatea*, and eight minutes later she opened fire. One after another German light cruisers and destroyers emerged and defined themselves from the dimness of the horizon, and behind them a long smoke cloud declared the presence of important hostile forces.

Delay of the 5th Battle Squadron.

The *Galatea's* message at 2.20 and the sound of her guns at 2.28 were sufficient for Admiral Beatty. A hostile

[1] The main facts and times throughout this account are taken from the Official Admiralty Narrative of Jutland.

Photo: L.N.A.

H.M.S. *PRINCESS ROYAL.*

One of the battle-cruisers engaged at Jutland under the flag of Admiral Beatty, the *Princess Royal* was in the action from the outset. She was among those of Beatty's ships to be hit in that first fatal half-hour, and it was on the report of a salvo falling on or around her that the Admiral said to his Flag Captain, "Chatfield, there seems to be something wrong with our —— ships to-day. Turn two points to port!"

enterprise of some kind was in progress. German warships were at sea. At 2.32 the *Lion,* having already warned her consorts by signal of her intentions, turned about again and increasing her speed to 22 knots set off in pursuit, steering for the Horn Reef Channel and meaning to cut whatever enemy might be abroad from their harbours. All the battle-cruisers followed the *Lion,* and executed the Vice-Admiral's order. But the 5th Battle Squadron, 4½ miles astern, continued to carry out the previous instructions, and for eight minutes steered in exactly the opposite direction along the left leg of a northward zig-zag, as if oblivious to the vital change in the situation. During these eight minutes the 5th Battle Squadron was losing touch with the battle-cruisers at the rate of over forty miles an hour. When eventually they turned at 2.40, they were already ten miles behind the van. This loss of distance and time their best efforts were not able to fully retrieve before action was joined.

One of the many controversies of Jutland centres around this delay in turning the 5th Battle Squadron. On the one hand, it is contended that Rear-Admiral Evan-Thomas who commanded it did not make out the signal flags until 2.40.[1] On the other, it is claimed that he knew at 2.20 that enemy ships were in sight; that the *Barham,* his flagship, received at 2.30 by wireless the course about to be steered by the *Lion;*[2] that his general and dominant orders were to keep supporting station five miles from the *Lion;* that whatever the difficulty in reading the signal flags, the movements of the battle-cruisers were obvious; that no one on the *Barham's* bridge could miss seeing all the six enormous British ships only 9,000 yards away suddenly turn about and steer eastward towards the enemy; and that no flag signals or wireless orders were needed to require

[1] Official Narrative: Lord Jellicoe's Remarks, Appendix G, p. 106.

[2] Admiralty footnote 2 to Lord Jellicoe's Remarks.

Rear-Admiral Evan-Thomas's battle squadron to conform to the movements of the force and of the Commander his whole purpose and duty was to support.

Such are the rival views, and decision upon them is scarcely difficult. It is common ground between all parties that Admiral Evan-Thomas, once he realized the position, did all in his power to recover the lost distance, and that, profiting by the manœuvring deviations of the converging and fighting lines, he in fact recovered upwards of four miles of it. The result however of his eight minutes' delay in turning was inexorably to keep him and his tremendous guns out of the action for the first most critical and most fatal half-hour, and even thereafter to keep him at extreme range.

Beatty's Decision.

But the question has also been raised: was Admiral Beatty right to turn instantly in pursuit of the enemy? Ought he not first to have closed on the 5th Battle Squadron and turned his whole ten great ships together? To this question the answer also seems clear. It is the duty of a Commander, whenever possible, to concentrate a superior force for battle. But Beatty's six battle-cruisers were in themselves superior in numbers, speed, and gun power to the whole of the German battle-cruisers, even if, as was not at this moment certain, any or all of these were at sea. The issue for the British Admiral was not therefore whether to concentrate a superior force or not, but

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

H.M.S. *INDEFATIGABLE* AT JUTLAND.

The *Indefatigable* is seen here shortly before going into action at Jutland. She was a battle-cruiser of 18,750 tons and carried eight 12-inch, sixteen 4-inch guns and two torpedo tubes. She was the first British ship to be lost at Jutland, being hit by three out of a salvo of four shells, after which she blew up and sank almost without survivors.

Photo: A. D. Duckworth, R.N.

BATTLE-CRUISERS IN ACTION AT JUTLAND (1).

This photograph, together with that on the page opposite, which is an extension of the same picture, is one of several taken during the actual battle. These photographs (others are to be found illustrating these chapters) are unique, and were among the very few to be taken during the whole course of the action.

whether, having concentrated a superior force, to steam for six minutes away from the enemy in order to concentrate an overwhelming force. Six minutes' steaming away from the enemy might mean a loss of six thousand yards in pursuit.

The last time Beatty had seen German ships was when Hipper's battle-cruisers faded out of the sight of the crippled *Lion* sixteen months before at the Dogger Bank. The impression that every minute counted was dominant in his mind. Why should he wait to become stronger when by every test of paper and every memory of battle he was already strong enough? Had the 5th Battle Squadron turned when he turned, it would have been in close support if fighting occurred and took an adverse turn. The doctrine that after sufficient force has been concentrated an Admiral should delay, and at the risk of losing the whole opportunity gather a still larger force, was one which could only be doubtfully applied even to the Battle Fleet, and would paralyse the action of fast scouting forces. It would however no doubt have been better if the original cruising formation of the battle-cruisers and the 5th Battle Squadron had been more compact. But the facts, when at 2.32 Beatty decided that the enemy was present in sufficient strength to justify turning the heavy ships about, made it his clear duty to steam at once and at the utmost speed in their direction. All that impulse, all that ardour give was no doubt present in the Admiral's mind; but these were joined by all that the coldest science of war and the longest view of naval history proclaimed.

It was unlikely that no stronger enemy forces should be behind the German scouting screen: but up till this moment nothing but light cruisers and destroyers had appeared. Now at about 3.20 the *New Zealand* sighted five enemy ships on her starboard bow; and from 3.31 onwards the *Lion* distinguished one after another the whole five German battle-cruisers.

Hipper's Trap.

Admiral von Hipper had for an hour been passing through experiences similar to those of Admiral Beatty. His light cruisers had brushed into British scouting ships. He had hurried forward to their aid. Suddenly at 3.20 he was confronted with the appari-

Photo: A. D. Duckworth, R.N.

BATTLE-CRUISERS IN ACTION AT JUTLAND (2).

The time at which this photograph was taken was about 3.30 p.m., on May 31, 1916. Enemy battle-cruisers have been reported ahead. H.M.S. *Nottingham* is seen on the port bow of H.M.S. *Birmingham*. The first battle-cruiser squadron is on the horizon.

tion of Beatty's six battle-cruisers bearing down on him at full speed, accompanied by their flotillas and light cruisers and supported by the menace of dark smoke banks against the western sky. As on January 24, 1915, he acted with promptitude. He immediately turned about and ran apparently for home. But this time there were two new factors at work. Beatty knew for certain from their relative position in the sea that he could force his enemy to battle. Hipper knew that he was drawing Beatty into the jaws of the advancing High Sea Fleet. We see these splendid squadrons shearing through the waters that will soon be lashed by their cannonade, each Commander with the highest hopes—the British Admiral exulting because he had surely overtaken his foe; the German nursing the secret of his trap. So for a space both fleets drove forward in a silence.

The combat of the battle-cruisers which preceded the encounter of the main Fleets off Jutland is a self-contained episode. Both Admirals, tactics apart, wished for a trial of strength and quality. Human beings have never wielded so resolutely such tremendous engines or such intense organizations of destruction. The most powerful guns ever used, the highest explosives ever devised, the fastest and the largest ships of war ever launched, the cream of the officers and men of the British and German nations, all that the martial science of either Navy could achieve—clashed against each other in this rigorous though intermittent duel.

Each in turn faced an adverse superiority of numbers; each had behind him supporting forces which, could they be made available, would have involved the destruction of the other. Hipper counted on the High Sea Fleet and Beatty could always fall back on his four *Queen Elizabeths*. Each in turn retired before superior forces and endeavoured to draw his opponent into overwhelming disadvantage. The officers and the men on both sides showed themselves completely unaffected in their decisions and conduct by the frightful apparatus which they used upon each other; and their conflict represents in its intensity the concentration and the consummation of the war effort of man. The battle-cruiser action would of course have been eclipsed by a general battle between the main Fleets. But since this never occurred to any serious extent, the two hours' fight

between Beatty and Hipper constitutes the prodigy of modern war on sea.

The Battle-Cruiser Action.

The detailed story of the action has been told so often and told so well that it needs only brief repetition here. Both the German and French accounts are excellent, and the British Official Narrative is a model of exact and yet stirring professional description. The salient features can be recognized by anyone.

Both sides deliberately converged to effective striking distance. Fire was opened by the *Lützow* and answered by the *Lion* a little after a quarter to four. Each ship engaged its respective antagonist. As there were six British to five German battle-cruisers, the *Lion* and the *Princess Royal* were able to concentrate on the enemy's flagship *Lützow*. The chances of the battle on either side led to discrepancies in the selection of targets, and sometimes two British ships were firing at one German, while another was ignored, or *vice versa*. Two minutes after the great guns had opened fire at about 14,000 yards, the *Lion* was hit twice; and the third salvo of the *Princess Royal* struck the *Lützow*. On both sides four guns at a time were fired, and at every discharge four shells each weighing about half a ton smote target or water in a volley.

In the first thirty-seven minutes of an action which lasted above two hours, one-third of the British force was destroyed. At four o'clock the *Indefatigable*, after twelve minutes at battery with the *Von der Tann*, hit by three simultaneous shells from a salvo of four, blew up and sank almost without survivors. Twenty-six minutes later the *Queen Mary*, smitten amidships by a plunging salvo from the *Derfflinger*, burst into flame, capsized, and after thirty seconds exploded into a pillar of smoke which rose 800 feet in the air, bearing with it for 200 feet such items as a 50-foot steamboat. The *Tiger* and the *New Zealand*, following her at the speed of an ordinary train, and with only 500 yards between them, had barely time to sheer off port and starboard to avoid her wreck. The *Tiger* passed through the smoke cloud black as night, and her gunnery officer, unable to fire, took advantage of the pitch darkness to reset to zero the director controls of his four turrets.[1] Meanwhile the *Lion*, after being eight minutes in action, was hit on her midship turret (Q) by a shell which, but for a sublime act of personal devotion and comprehension, would have been fatal.

The Immortal Marine.

All the crew of the turret except its commanding officer, Major Hervey (Royal Marine Artillery), and his sergeant were instantly killed; and Major Hervey had both his legs shattered or torn off. Each turret in a capital ship is a self-contained organism. It is seated in the hull of the vessel like a

[1] *Fighting at Jutland.*

THE BATTLE-CRUISER ACTION.

Sketch showing the relative positions of the British and German battle-cruisers at 3.50 p.m., on May 31, 1916.

fort; it reaches from the armoured gun-house visible to all, 50 feet downwards to the very keel. Its intricate hydraulic machinery, its ammunition trunk communicating with the shell-rooms and magazines—all turn together in whatever direction its twin guns may point. The shell of the *Lützow* wrecked the turret and set the wreckage on fire. The shock flung and jammed one of the guns upwards, and twenty minutes later the cartridge which was in its breech slid out. It caught fire and ignited the other charges in the gun-cages. The flash from these passed down the trunk to the charges at the bottom.

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

H.M.S. *LION* HIT ON HER MIDSHIP TURRET.

Admiral Beatty's flagship is shown above at the moment of receiving the direct hit which put her midship turret out of action and which, but for the heroism of Major Hervey, might have sent her to the bottom. A full description of this episode, one of the many heroic acts performed by individuals during the battle, is given in the text.

None but dead and dying remained in the turret. All had been finished by the original shell-burst. The men in the switch-board department and the handling parties of the shell-room were instantly killed by the flash of the cordite fire. The blast passed through and through the turret in all its passages and foundations, and rose 200 feet above its gaping roof. But the doors of the magazine were closed. Major Hervey, shattered, weltering, stifled, seared, had found it possible to give the order down the voice tube: "Close magazine doors and flood magazines." So the *Lion* drove on her course unconscious of her peril, or by what expiring breath it had been effectually averted. In the long, rough, glorious history of the Royal Marines there is no name and no deed which in its character and its consequences ranks above this.

The Crisis Surmounted.

Meanwhile the Vice-Admiral, pacing the bridge among the shell fragments rebounding from the water, and like Nelson of old in the brunt of the enemy's fire, has learned that the *Indefatigable* and the *Queen Mary* have been destroyed, and that his own magazines are menaced by fire. It is difficult to compare sea with land war. But each battle-

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

THE LAST OF H.M.S. *QUEEN MARY*.

The second British battle-cruiser to meet with disaster at Jutland, at 4.26 p.m. H.M.S. *Queen Mary* was smitten amidships by a plunging salvo from the *Derfflinger*. She burst into flames, and thirty seconds later blew up in a pillar of smoke rising to a height of 800 feet. The photograph shown here was taken at the moment of the explosion.

cruiser was a unit comparable at least to a complete infantry division. Two divisions out of his six have been annihilated in the twinkling of an eye. The enemy, whom he could not defeat with six ships to five, are now five ships to four. Far away all five German battle-cruisers—grey smudges changing momentarily into "rippling sheets of flame"—are still intact and seemingly invulnerable. "Nevertheless," proceeds the official narrative, "the squadron continued its course undismayed." But the movement of these blind, inanimate castles of steel was governed at this moment entirely by the spirit of a single man. Had he faltered, had he taken less than a conqueror's view of the British fighting chances, all these great engines of sea power and war power would have wobbled off in meaningless disarray.

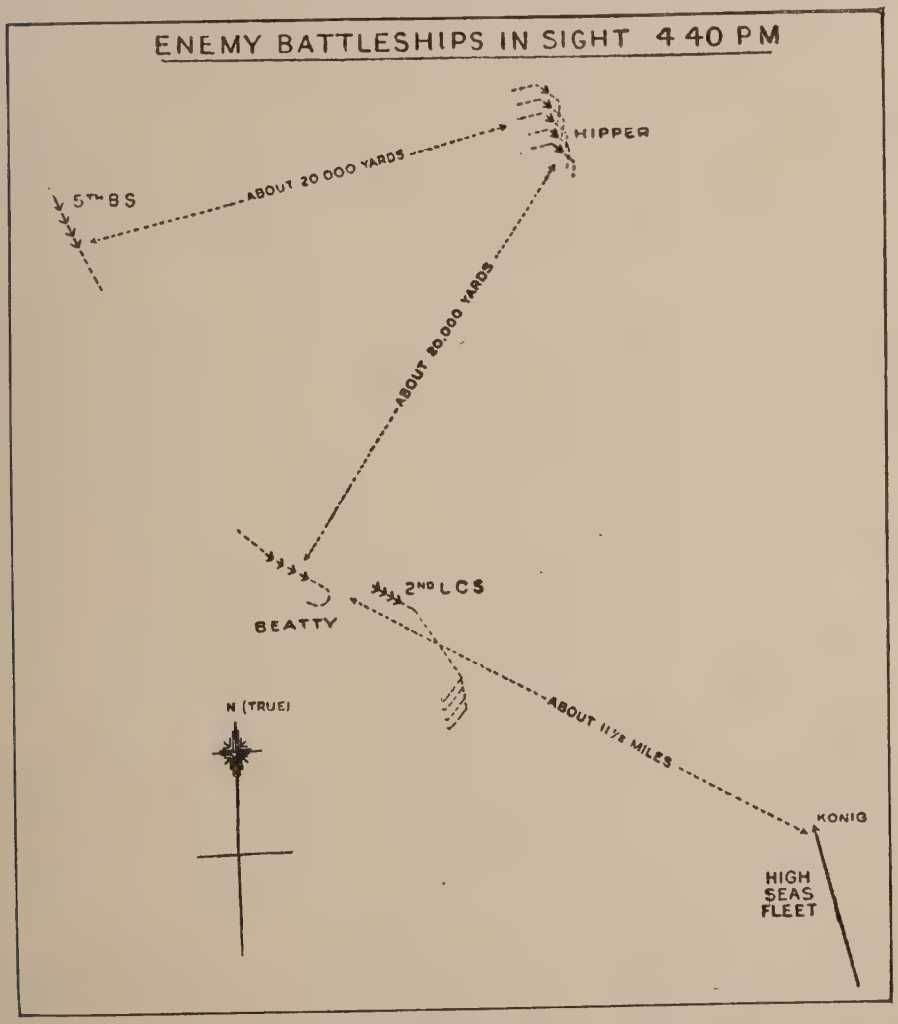
This is a moment on which British naval historians will be glad to dwell; and the actual facts deserve to be recorded. The *Indefatigable* had disappeared beneath the waves. The *Queen Mary* had towered up to heaven in a pillar of fire. The *Lion* was in flames. A tremendous salvo struck upon or about her following ship, the *Princess Royal*, which vanished in a cloud of spray and smoke. A signalman sprang on to the *Lion's* bridge with the words: "*Princess Royal* blown up, sir." On this the Vice-Admiral said to his Flag Captain, "Chatfield, there seems to be something wrong with our —— ships to-day. Turn two points to port," i.e. two points nearer the enemy.

Thus the crisis of the battle was surmounted. All the German damage was done in the first half-hour. As the action proceeded the British battle-cruisers, although reduced to an inferi-

ority in numbers, began to assert an ascendancy over the enemy. Their guns became increasingly effective, and they themselves received no further serious injury.

Intervention of the 5th Battle Squadron.

The deterioration in the accuracy and rate of the German fire during the next hour and a half was obvious. Each side in turn manœuvred nearer to or farther from the enemy in order to frustrate his aim. And from ten minutes past four the 5th Battle Squadron had begun to fire, at the long range of 17,000 yards, upon Admiral von Hipper's last two ships. The influence of this intervention, tardy but timely, is somewhat lightly treated by the British official narrators. It receives

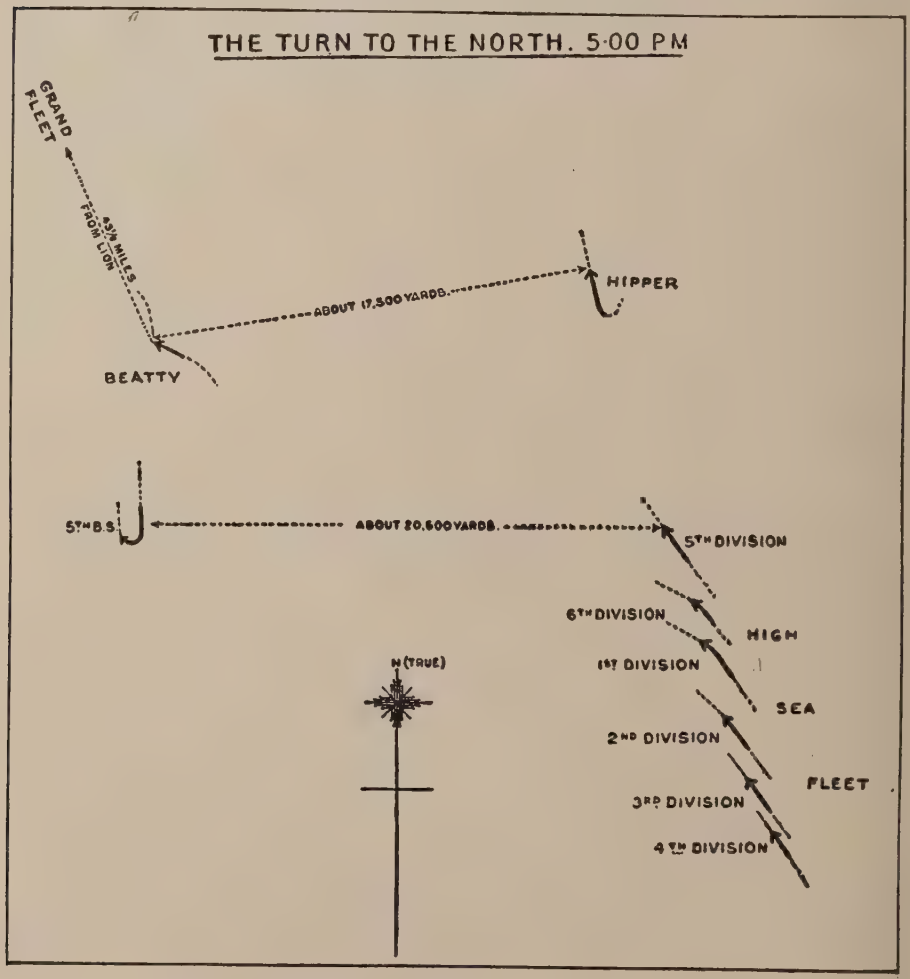


ENEMY BATTLESHIPS IN SIGHT, 4.40 P.M.

Sketch showing the relative positions of the warring squadrons as the High Sea Fleet under Admiral Scheer is steaming north to the support of von Hipper and the German battle-cruisers. The High Sea Fleet was first sighted by H.M.S. *Southampton* of the 2nd Light Cruiser Squadron at 4.33 p.m., and shortly afterwards by Admiral Beatty himself.

the fullest testimony in the German accounts. The four mighty ships of Admiral Evan-Thomas threw their 15-inch shells with astonishing accuracy across the great distances which separated them from the German rear. If only they had been 5,000 yards closer, the defeat, if not destruction, of Hipper's squadron was inevitable. That they were not 5,000 yards closer was due entirely to their slowness in grasping the situation when the first contact was made with the enemy.

However, they now came thundering into battle; and their arrival within effective range would, in less than an hour, have been decisive—if no other German forces had been at sea that day. The battle-cruisers continued to fire at one another with the utmost rapidity at varying ranges. But from 4.30 onward the approaching and increasing fire of the 5th



THE TURN TO THE NORTH, 5 P.M., MAY 31, 1916.

No sooner was Admiral Beatty satisfied that the High Sea Fleet was bearing down upon him than he led his four ships round and, doubling back upon his course, steamed towards Jellicoe. Immediately afterwards a similar manœuvre was carried out by Hipper, who was still unaware of the proximity of the Grand Fleet. The manœuvres and the changing positions were as outlined above.

From the drawing by F. Matania.

SERVING THE GUNS AT JUTLAND.

The above drawing, prepared from notes supplied by an eye-witness, conveys a vigorous impression of what happened on board more than one ship engaged at Jutland. A heavy shell has wrecked the turret and killed or wounded most of the gunners. Those who are left, dazed and wounded though they be, strive to keep their gun in action. Deprived of protection, another similar hit must destroy the gun and the remaining members of its crew.

THE BATTLE-CRUISE

Another of the photographs specially referred to on page 848 and taken during the course of the right, but German shells are seen exploding in the sea throwing up great volumes of water and from a photographic standpoint, up to the standard usually required in such illustrations. deck of a British warship

Battle Squadron, and the development by both sides of fierce destroyer attacks and counter-attacks, sensibly abated the intensity of their action.

Admiral Scheer, advancing with the whole High Sea Fleet, had received the news of the first contact between the light cruisers at 2.28 p.m., almost immediately after it had occurred. At 3.25 he learned of the presence of the British battle-cruisers. A message received at 3.45 from the "Chief of Reconnaissance" showed that Admiral von Hipper was engaged with six enemy battle-cruisers on a south-easterly course. Scheer understood clearly that Hipper was falling back upon him in the hopes of drawing the British battle-cruisers under the guns of the main German Fleet. He accordingly steered at first so as to take the pursuing British if possible between two fires. But when he heard a few minutes later that the *Queen Elizabeths* had also appeared upon the scene, he conceived it his duty to hasten directly to the support of his now outnumbered battle-cruisers. Leaving his older battleships to follow at their best pace, he therefore steamed north in line at 17 knots shortly after four o'clock.

Photo: A. D. Duckworth, R.N.

N ACTION, MAY 31, 1916.

action. The German ships are not shown on this picture, being beyond the British vessels and to the spray. It will be noticed that this picture and others showing something of the battle are not, Their value lies in the fact that they are reproduced from genuine photographs taken from the while the action was going on.

The opposing forces were now approaching each other at 43 miles an hour.

The High Sea Fleet in Sight—The Run to the North.

The 2nd Light Cruiser Squadron, heralding Beatty's advance and guarding him from surprise, was the first to see the hostile fleet. At 4.33 the *Southampton,* carrying Commodore Goodenough's broad pennant, sighted the head of the long line of German battleships drawing out upon the horizon, and signalled the magic words "Battleships in sight." Almost as soon as the reports of the light cruisers had reached the *Lion,* Beatty himself sighted the High Sea Fleet. He grasped the situation instantly. Without losing a moment he led his remaining four ships round in a complete turn, and steamed directly back along his course towards Jellicoe. Hipper, now in touch with Scheer, turned immediately afterwards in the same direction. The situation of the two Admirals was thus exactly reversed: Beatty tried to lead Hipper and the German battle fleet up to Jellicoe; Hipper pursued his retreating foe without knowing that he was momentarily

approaching the British Grand Fleet. In this phase of the action, which is called "The Run to the North," firing was continued by the battle-cruisers on both sides. The light was now far more favourable to the British, and the German battle-cruisers suffered severely from their fire.

The Ordeal of the 5th Battle Squadron.

On sighting the main German Fleet, Beatty had turned about so swiftly that his ships soon passed the 5th Battle Squadron coming up at full speed and still on their southerly course. As the two squadrons ran past each other on opposite courses, the *Lion* signalled to the *Barham* to turn about in succession. The *Lion's* signal of recall was flown at 4.48. She passed the *Barham* two miles away, with this signal flying, at 4.53; and Rear-Admiral Evan-Thomas responded to the signal three or four minutes later.

Perhaps the Rear-Admiral, having been slow in coming into action, was inclined to be slow in coming out. Brief as was this interval, it was sufficient at the speed at which all the ships were moving to expose the 5th Battle Squadron to action with the van of the German Battle Fleet. The van was formed by the German 3rd Squadron, comprising the *Königs* and the *Kaisers*, the strongest and newest vessels in the German Navy. The four *Queen Elizabeths* were now subjected to tremendous fire concentrated particularly upon the point where each turned in succession. The two leading ships, the *Barham* and the *Valiant*, were engaged with the enemy's battle-cruisers; the rear ships, the *Warspite* and the *Malaya*, fought the whole of the finest squadron in the German Fleet. This apparently unequal conflict lasted for over half an hour. All the ships except the *Valiant* were struck repeatedly with the heaviest shells, the *Warspite* alone receiving thirteen hits and the *Malaya* seven. Such, however, was the strength of these vessels that none of their turrets were put out of action and their speed was wholly unaffected.

All the main forces were now fast drawing together, and all converged and arrived upon the scene in one great movement. Every ship was moving simultaneously, and after an almost unperceived interval, the duel of the battle-cruisers merged in the preliminaries of a general Fleet action.

Photo: Cribb.

THE LAST PHOTOGRAPH OF LORD KITCHENER.

The month of June, 1916, ushered in to the sullen rumble of the naval guns at Jutland and passing amidst the roar of the Somme bombardment, was destined to mark the death of Lord Kitchener. The Secretary of State for War, proceeding on a mission to Russia, went down with H.M.S. *Hampshire* on the 5th of that month. He is seen here boarding the *Iron Duke* shortly before returning to his destroyer for the *Hampshire*. Colonel Fitzgerald is standing on deck directly behind Lord Kitchener.

CHAPTER LIX

JUTLAND: THE ENCOUNTER

" Courage and Conduct : Rooke and Toulouse ! "
(Old Naval Ballad.)

The Decisive and the Unknown—The Line of Battle—Jellicoe's System of Command—Admiral Scheer's Point of View—With the *Iron Duke*—Method of Deployment—Vital Information—Scouting Cruisers—The Meeting—Admiral Hood in Action—The *Defence* Sunk—Need to Deploy the Fleet—Jellicoe's Decision—A Third Course—Neglect of the *Queen Elizabeths*—Progress of the Deployment—Destruction of the *Invincible*—Scheer Turns Away—The Second Opportunity—Scheer Turns Away Again—Beatty Renews the Action—Darkness Falls—Scheer's Relief—Jellicoe's Problem—The Balance of Probability—The British Flotillas—The Admiralty's Decisive Message—Scheer's Escape—Nobody's Victory—The German Sortie of August 19—The Achievement of U 52—Some Conclusions—The Battle-Cruiser Type—The Flash Danger—British and German Shells—Tactics—The Future.

UP to this moment we have been moving through events which, although terrific, were nevertheless within the region of previous experience. The battle-cruisers had fought each other before, and their Admirals knew the character of the conflict, the power of the weapons and what the ordeal was like. Moreover, on neither side did the battle-cruiser force amount to a vital stake.

The Decisive and the Unknown.

But the battle-fleets themselves are now approaching each other at a closing speed of over thirty-five miles an hour, and with every minute we enter the kingdom at once of the Decisive and of the Unknown.

The supreme moment on which all the thought and efforts of the British and German Admiralties had been for many years concentrated was now at hand. On both sides nearly the whole naval effort of the nation had been devoted to the battle-fleets. In the British Navy, at any rate, the picture of the great sea battle had dominated every other thought, and its needs had received precedence over every other requirement. Everything had been lavished upon the drawing out of a line of batteries of such a preponderance and in such an order that the German battle-fleet would be blasted and shattered *for certain* in a very short space of time. Numbers, gun power, quality, training—all had been provided for the Commander-in-Chief to the utmost extent possible to British manhood and science. Unless some entirely unforeseen factor intervened or some incalculable accident occurred, there was no reason to doubt that thirty minutes' firing within ten thousand yards between two parallel lines of battle would achieve a complete victory.

The Line of Battle.

Therefore for years Jellicoe's mind had been focussed upon the simplest form of naval battle : the single line and the parallel course; a long-range artillery conflict; and defensive action against torpedo attack. Everything beyond this opening phase was speculative and complicated. If the opening phase were satisfactory, everything else would probably follow from it. The Admiralty could not look beyond providing their Commander-in-Chief with an ample superiority in ships of every kind. The method and moment of joining battle and its tactical conduct could be ruled by him alone. It is now argued that it would have been better if, instead of riveting all attention and endeavour upon a long-range artillery duel by the two fleets in line on roughly parallel courses, the much more flexible system of engaging by divisions, of using the

fastest battleships apart from the slower, and of dealing with each situation according to the needs of the moment, had been employed. It may well be so; and had there been several battles or even encounters between the British and German fleets in the war, there is no doubt that a far higher system of battle tactics would have developed.

But nothing like this particular event had ever happened before, and nothing like it was ever to happen again.

The "Nelson touch" arose from years of fighting between the strongest ships of the time. Nelson's genius enabled him to measure truly the consequences of any decision. But that genius worked upon precise practical data. He had seen the same sort of thing happen on a less great scale many times over before the Battle of Trafalgar. Nelson did not have to worry about under-water damage. He felt he knew what would happen in a fleet action. Jellicoe did not know. Nobody knew. All he knew was that a complete victory would not improve decisively an already favourable naval situation, and that a total defeat would lose the war. He was prepared to accept battle on his own terms; he was not prepared to force one at a serious hazard. The battle was to be fought as he wished it or left unfought.

Jellicoe's System of Command.

But while we may justify on broad grounds of national policy the general attitude of the Commander-in-Chief towards the conditions upon which alone a decisive battle should be fought, neither admiration nor agreement can adhere to the system of command and training which he had developed in the Fleet. Everything was centralized in the Flagship, and all initiative except in avoiding torpedo attack was denied to

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

BATTLESHIPS OF THE *ORION* CLASS.

The *Orion* class of battleships comprised the *Orion, Monarch, Thunderer* and *Conqueror*. These vessels were completed in 1911–12 and were of 22,500 tons. They carried ten 13·5-inch, sixteen 4-inch and four 3-pounder guns. All the four ships of this class were with the Grand Fleet at Jutland. Their positions during the deployment of the Fleet may be seen by reference to the chart on page 870.

the leaders of squadrons and divisions. A ceaseless stream of signals from the Flagship was therefore required to regulate the movement of the Fleet and the distribution of the fire. These signals prescribed the course and speed of every ship, as well as every manœuvring turn. In exercises such a centralization may have produced a better drill. But in the smoke, confusion and uncertainty of battle the process was far too elaborate. The Fleet was too large to fight as a single organization or to be minutely directed by the finger of a single man.

The Germans, following the Army system of command, had foreseen before the war that the intelligent co-operation of subordinates, who know thoroughly the general views and spirit of their Chief, must be substituted in a fleet action for a rigid and centralized control. At this moment the line in which they were approaching was in fact three self-contained independently manœuvring squadrons following one another. But Jellicoe's system denied initiative not only to his battle squadrons, but even to the flotillas. Throughout the battle he endeavoured personally to direct the whole Fleet. He could, as his own account describes,[1] only see or know a part of what was taking place; and as no human mind can receive more than a limited number of impressions in any given period of time, his control disappeared as a guiding power and only remained as a check on the enterprise of others.

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

DESTROYERS IN LINE AHEAD.

The word "destroyer" is an abbreviation for torpedo-boat destroyer, as vessels of this type used to be called. The first torpedo-boat destroyer designed for the Royal Navy was launched in 1893, since when both the size of such craft and their armament have been greatly increased. The rôle of the destroyer is mainly protective. They were employed during the Great War against submarines, for patrol and convoy work and in general as the cavalry of the fleet. The largest and latest destroyer at the outbreak of the war was some 260 feet long. By the end of the war the length of such boats under construction had increased to some 300 feet.

Admiral Scheer's Point of View.

Let us now take the position of Admiral Scheer. He had no intention of fighting a battle against the whole British Fleet. He was under no illusions about the relative strength of the rival batteries. Nothing could be more clownish than to draw up his fleet on

[1] *The Grand Fleet.*

parallel courses with an opponent firing twice his weight of metal and manned by a personnel whose science, seamanship and fortitude commanded his sincere respect. He had not come out with any idea of fighting a pitched battle. He had never intended to fight at a hopeless disadvantage. If he met weaker forces or equal forces, or any forces which gave a fair or sporting chance of victory, he would fight with all the martial skill and courage inseparable from the German name. But from the moment he knew that he was in the presence of the united Grand Fleet and saw the whole horizon bristling with its might, his only aim was to free himself as quickly as possible without dishonour from a fatal trap. In this he was entirely successful.

He had sedulously practised the turn-about movement by which under cover of torpedo attacks and smoke screens every ship in the line could circle about individually and steam in the opposite direction without fail even if the line was itself a curve or marred by the "kinks" and disorder of heavy action. To this manœuvre and to its thorough comprehension by his captains the German Fleet was twice to owe its triumphant escape.

Having regard to the moods and intentions of the two Commanders, to their respective strategic problems, to their geographical position, to their relative speeds and to the three hours' daylight that alone remained when they met, it will be seen that the chances of a general fleet action being fought out on May 31 were remote.

* * * *

With the *Iron Duke*.

The reader must now take his mental station on the bridge of the *Iron Duke* which all this time has been steaming forward leading the centre of the British battle-fleet. Sir John Jellicoe has read every signal made by Admiral Beatty's light cruisers and battle-cruisers. He has therefore been able to follow on the chart the course of events from the first report of the suspicious vessels by the *Galatea* to the momentous announcement of Commodore Goodenough that the High Sea Fleet was in sight. The forces at his disposal are moving in a vast crescent. Its southern horn consists of Beatty's detached command, a fleet in itself. On the north or less-exposed flank is Admiral Hood with a force similar to, but smaller than Beatty's, and consisting of the 3rd Battle-Cruiser Squadron with two light cruisers and destroyers. The immediate front of the battle-fleet is screened by eight pre-Dreadnought armoured cruisers followed by four of the latest light cruisers (*Carolines*).

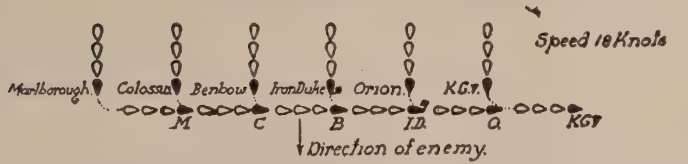
The Commander-in-Chief knows that all his powerful advanced scouting forces of the southern flank are engaged and that a heavy battle-cruiser action has been in progress for nearly two hours. From the first moment of the alarm he has been working his fleet up to its highest combined speed, and the whole of his twenty-four battleships[1] are now steaming at 20 knots. As soon as he heard that the German battle-cruisers were at sea, he had ordered Admiral Hood with the *Invincibles* and other vessels to reinforce Beatty. He finds time to telegraph to the Admiralty the solemn message, "Fleet action imminent"; and far away around the indented coasts of Britain arsenals, dockyards, hospitals spring into a long-prepared intense activity.

The task is now the deployment of the Fleet. And here, while the armadas are closing, we must step aside for a few moments from the narrative to enable the lay reader to appreciate some of the technical issues involved.

The evolutions of cavalry in the days of shock tactics and those of a modern fleet resemble each other. Both approach in column and fight in line; and cavalry and fleet drill consist primarily in swift and well-executed changes from one formation to the other. The Grand Fleet was now advancing in a mass of six columns of four ships, each column a mile apart. The Fleet Flagship, the *Iron Duke*, led the fourth column from the right. Although the breadth of this array was over ten thousand yards, it was completely under the control of the

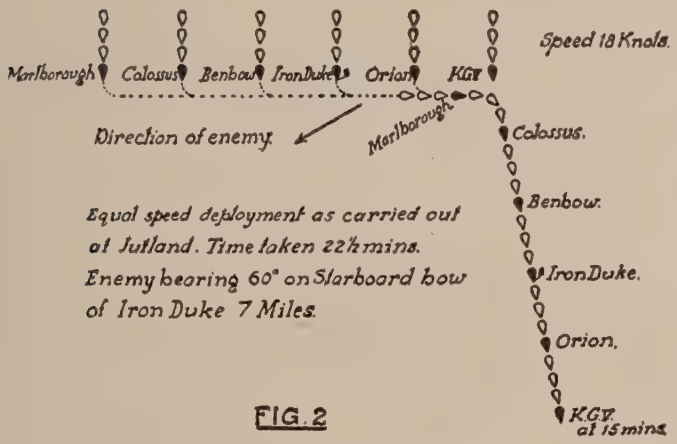
[1] These with the four *Queen Elizabeths* made up his twenty-eight.

DEPLOYMENT DIAGRAMS.



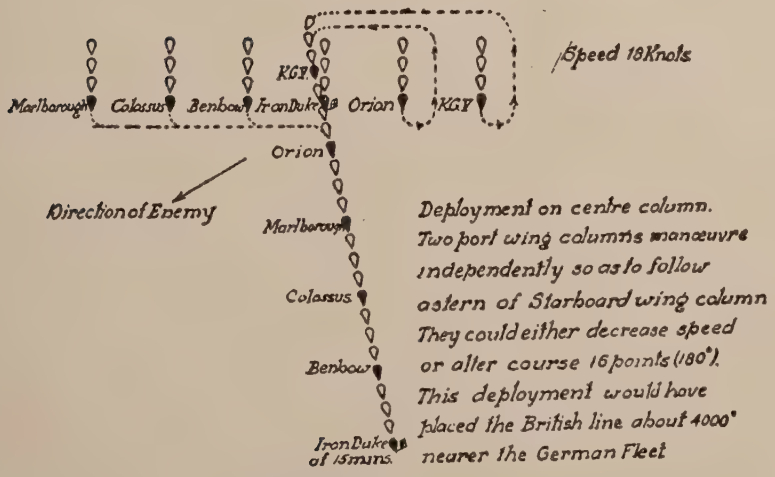
Equal Speed deployment by a simultaneous turn of leaders of columns 8 points (90°). Time taken 4 minutes. Applicable if the enemy is right ahead of centre column and deploys in the same direction

FIG. 1



Equal speed deployment as carried out at Jutland. Time taken 22½ mins. Enemy bearing 60° on Starboard bow of Iron Duke 7 Miles.

FIG. 2



Deployment on centre column. Two port wing columns manœuvre independently so as to follow astern of Starboard wing column They could either decrease speed or alter course 16 points (180°). This deployment would have placed the British line about 4000 nearer the German Fleet

FIG. 3

DEPLOYMENT DIAGRAMS.

The diagrams given here, set out after the manner of a drill book, convey clearly some of the evolutions which are possible in the tactical handling of a fleet. A careful study of these diagrams will be found helpful to the reader and will enable him to appreciate some of the technical issues involved in deployment and the problems confronting Admiral Jellicoe as he approached the German fleet.

Commander-in-Chief.[1] His ideal at the moment of contact would be to meet the enemy's fleet in front of him, and he could for this purpose use his power of changing direction within certain limits, exactly as a skilful rider sets his horse squarely at a fence. But though the mass formation is so handy for approach or manœuvre, it is, alike to a cavalry division or a great fleet, fatal to be caught in such order by an enemy who has already deployed into line.

Method of Deployment.

Before the British battle-fleet could fight, it must deploy into line. The nearer the Commander-in-Chief could bring his fleet to the enemy in mass, the more certain he would be of being able to lead it squarely in the right direction; but the longer he waited and the nearer he got before deploying, the greater his risk of being caught at a terrible disadvantage. It is a task, like the landing of an aeroplane, of choosing the right moment between two opposite sets of dangers.

If the Commander-in-Chief has been skilful or lucky in guiding his mass of battleships in the true direction of the enemy's fleet and finds them exactly ahead of him, his deployment will be swift and easy. He has only to turn the leading ships of his columns to the right or to the left as the case may be, and the whole fleet in four minutes will draw up in one long line of battle, firing at its fullest strength. If, however, owing to facts beyond human control or judgment, he has not been able to point his mass in exactly the right direction, or if he is still uncertain as to the true position of the enemy, he has an alternative method of deployment. He can make either of his flank columns steam onwards and the others follow in succession until the long single file which constitutes the line of battle is fully formed.

The second method has the advantage of being much more likely to fit an unexpected situation. The moment the enemy appears out of the horizon the leading ship of either flank division can be ordered to take up any course which is in good relation to the hostile line, and all the other ships will follow it in succession. But whereas to deploy into line by the first method would take the British Grand Fleet of that day only four minutes, the deployment in the wake of one of the flank columns, or as it is called "deployment on the wing," requires twenty-two minutes before its full fire can be developed. Meanwhile the whole of the enemy's fleet might be in action with only such a portion of ours as had drawn out into line of battle.

Vital Information.

To deploy correctly, accurate and instantaneous information of the position of the hostile fleet is all-important. For this reason the Commander-in-Chief is protected by cruisers and light cruisers under his direct control, who strive to watch the enemy's fleet continuously and tell him every few minutes where it is going and how it is formed. In the quarter of an hour which precedes the moment of deployment these scouts, or several of them, ought to be both in sight of the enemy and of their own flagship. Out of intense complexities intense simplicities emerge. Nothing ought to be trusted at such a crisis except direct visual signalling by searchlight flashes. This is almost like men speaking to each other. To trust in so cardinal a matter to the wireless reports of cruisers which are out of sight is to run a needless risk. Such reports are highly important and may sometimes disclose the exact situation. But if ever certainty is required, it is at the moment of fleet deployment; and certainty cannot be obtained from cruisers which are beyond the Commander-in-Chief's sight or not linked visually to vessels which he can see.

Both the Fleets and all the cruisers are moving fast and momentarily altering their whole relation to one another. The cruisers which are out of sight are very likely in heavy action, clinging on to the hostile fleet, zigzagging and turning suddenly to avoid gunfire or torpedo. They are sure to be out of their reckon-

[1] The diagrams on page 863 will show some of the many evolutions which are possible from this formation.

ing. Their reports have to be written, ciphered, dispatched, received, decoded before they reach the Commander-in-Chief. Ten minutes easily elapse in this process; and there are not ten minutes to spare. Moreover, the reports from different scouting ships may not agree. Three or four different versions may simultaneously reach the Commander-in-Chief, and not one of them will be absolutely accurate. Therefore the fateful act of deployment should invariably be founded upon the visual signal of a scout who is actually in sight of the enemy's fleet. The only sure method of knowing exactly where the hostile fleet is at the moment of deployment is the primitive plan of having light cruisers of your own which you can see and which can themselves see the enemy and each other. Such a network of lines of sight alone ensures exact knowledge of a vital matter.

Scouting Cruisers.

The duty of clinging to the German High Sea Fleet and continually reporting its whereabouts by wireless which could be read simultaneously by Beatty and by Jellicoe belonged in the first instance to the light cruisers of Beatty's scouting force; and admirably did Commodore Goodenough and his squadron discharge it. There is no ground for criticizing the *Lion* for not transmitting signals from the light cruisers while in heavy action herself. The *Iron Duke* read simultaneously everything that passed by wireless. But signals from light cruisers sixty, fifty, forty or even thirty miles away proved to be conflicting and erroneous. We now know that Goodenough was four miles out of his reckoning, and the *Iron Duke* was more than six. Reports from any of Beatty's vessels, all of which were out of sight and beyond the horizon, were an invaluable means by which Jellicoe could learn the general course of events and approach of the enemy. But they were not, and ought never to have been relied on, as a substitute for the reports of scouting cruisers of his own.

Nor was the Commander-in-Chief unprovided with the necessary vessels. Apart from the fourteen light cruisers detached with Beatty's advanced force, Jellicoe had reserved for his own special use four of the latest *Caroline* class of light cruiser. He had besides the eight armoured cruisers of the pre-Dreadnought era (*Defence, Warrior,* etc.). At the first alarm he had ordered these old vessels to increase to full speed and cover his front; but as they could not steam more than twenty knots and he was himself making eighteen and rising to twenty, they did not appreciably draw ahead of him in these important two hours. The *Carolines,* however, were designed for twenty-nine knots. Knowing that Beatty's force was committed to battle beyond the horizon, the Commander-in-Chief would have been prudent to use his four *Carolines* for the sole purpose of securing him early and exact information on which to base his deployment. His own battle orders declared that with less than 12 miles' visibility references to the enemy's latitude and longitude were quite useless, and emphasized the extreme importance of maintaining visual touch by means of linking cruisers.

In two hours the *Carolines* in a fan-shaped formation could have easily gained fifteen miles upon the *Iron Duke* in the general direction of the enemy. They would then have been in sight of the British armoured cruisers, which were themselves fully visible from the Grand Fleet. The *Carolines* themselves at this time could see at least seven miles. Thus the Commander-in-Chief could, had he so wished, have had more than twenty miles' accurate notice by visual signal of the position and line of advance of the German Fleet. This would have been an additional precaution to enable him to bring his fleet safely in mass formation to the exact position from which he could deploy on to the right course of battle by the four-minute method.

* * * *

The Meeting.

All the ships in both the Fleets were in the half-hour preceding the British deployment drawing together into a tremendous concourse. In that period the following principal events were taking place for the most part simultaneously.

Beatty's battle-cruisers with the 5th Battle Squadron behind them, were hurrying northward to make contact with, and draw the enemy on to, the Grand Fleet. Hipper and Rear-Admiral Boedicker, with the German 1st and 2nd Scouting Groups, were also running north, covering the advance of the German High Sea Fleet. Beatty and Hipper were engaging each other on roughly parallel courses, and the 5th Battle Squadron was in heavy action with the leading German battleships as well as with Hipper's battle-cruisers.

Meanwhile Admiral Hood in the *Invincible,* with the 3rd Battle-Cruiser Squadron, and preceded by the light cruisers *Chester* and *Canterbury,* was advancing on the northern flank of the British array. Thus at about 5.40 both German Scouting Groups were plunging into the centre of the British crescent (it had now become a horseshoe), of which the southern horn (Beatty) was rapidly retiring and the northern horn (Hood) was rapidly advancing.

Hipper with the 1st Scouting Group was in renewed action to the south-west, when at 5.36 the *Chester,* reconnoitring for Admiral Hood, encountered the German 2nd Scouting Group. At 5.40 three of the four light cruisers of which it consisted emerged swiftly from the haze, and the *Chester* was "almost immediately smothered in a hail of fire."[1] Nearly all her guns were broken up, and her deck became a shambles. But the centre of the British crescent was also in rapid advance; and at 5.47 the *Defence* (Flagship of Rear-Admiral Sir Robert Arbuthnot) and the *Warrior,* the centre ships of the line of armoured cruisers directly covering the advance of the Grand Fleet, sighted the 2nd Scouting Group from the opposite direction and opened a heavy fire upon them. Boedicker's light cruisers, glad to pursue the stricken *Chester,* turned away from the fire of these powerful though middle-aged vessels, only to meet a far more formidable antagonist.

Admiral Hood in Action.

Admiral Hood with his three battle-cruisers, swinging round towards the cannonade, came rushing out of the mist, and at 5.55 fell upon the German light cruisers with his 12-inch guns, crippling the *Wiesbaden* and badly damaging the *Pillau* and the *Frankfort* in a few minutes. The apparition of capital ships to the northward "fell on Admiral Boedicker like a thunderbolt."[1] From far in his rear came the reverberation of Beatty's cruiser action. This new antagonist must be the head of the main British Fleet. Boedicker instantly turned to escape from the closing jaws, leaving the wounded *Wiesbaden* to crawl out of danger as fast as she could. The explosion of Hood's guns carried—as will be seen—a similar warning to Hipper.

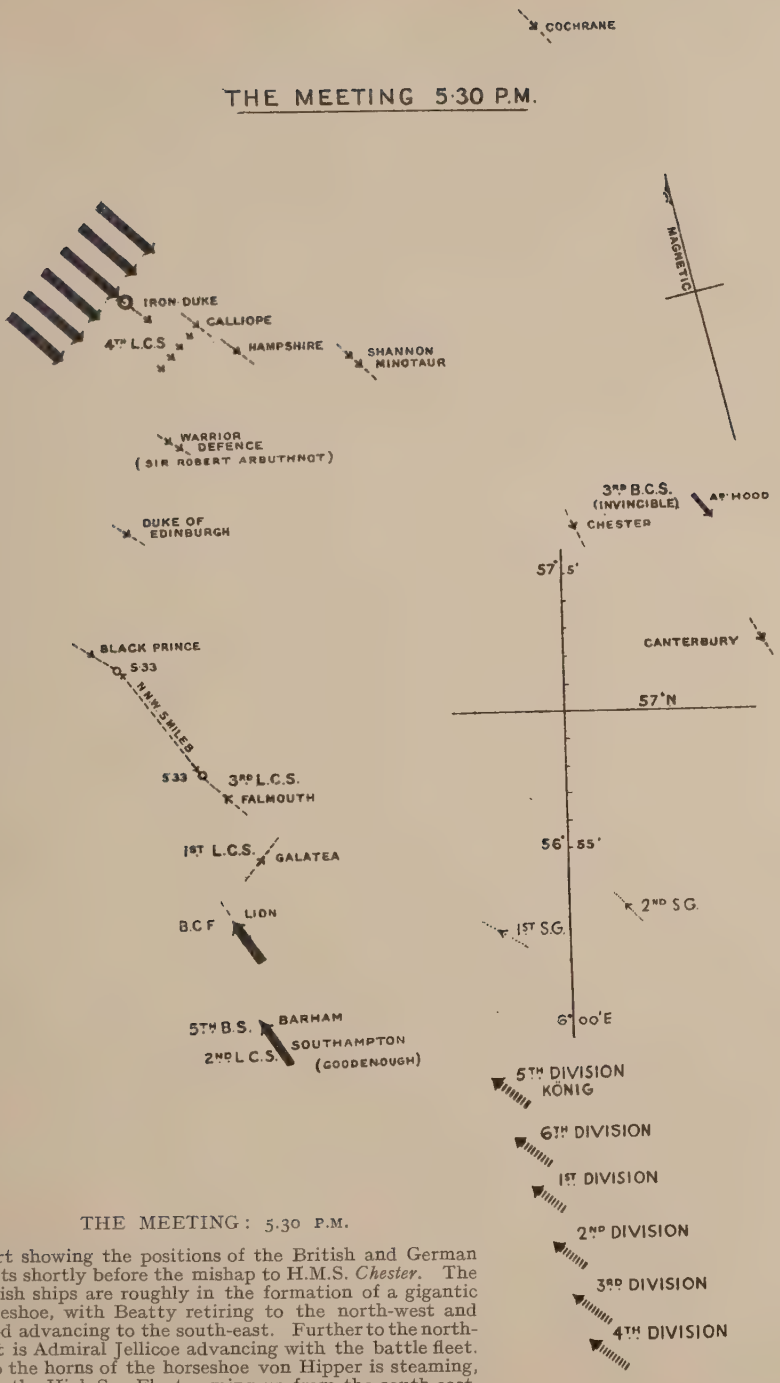
The *Defence* Sunk.

Meanwhile Arbuthnot in the *Defence,* followed by the *Warrior,* was pursuing the 2nd Scouting Group. He found the *Wiesbaden* dragging herself away. Determined to destroy her, he "came rushing down at her at full speed."[2] The *Lion,* heading the British battle-cruisers again in action with Hipper, had also converged. Arbuthnot in impetuous ardour pressed across her bows, forcing her off her course, throwing out the fire of her squadron and blanketing their target with his funnel smoke. He was within 6,000 yards of the *Wiesbaden,* and had turned to starboard to bring his whole broadside to bear, when the again advancing Hipper swung his guns upon him, as did some of the German battleships now also coming into range. In a moment the *Defence,* struck by a succession of shells from the heaviest guns, blew up in a terrific explosion and at 6.19 p.m. vanished with nearly 800 men in a huge pillar of smoke. The *Warrior,* grievously smitten, seemed about to share her fate. But meanwhile greater events were happening. The Grand Fleet's deployment had begun at 6.15.

During these events the run to the north had come to an end. At 5.25 Beatty had resumed his action with Hipper. The light was now favourable to the British. The 15-inch guns of the *Barham* and the *Valiant* were also firing

[1] Official Narrative, p 36.

[1] *Ibid.,* p. 36. [2] *Ibid.*



THE MEETING: 5.30 P.M.

Chart showing the positions of the British and German Fleets shortly before the mishap to H.M.S. *Chester*. The British ships are roughly in the formation of a gigantic horseshoe, with Beatty retiring to the north-west and Hood advancing to the south-east. Further to the north-west is Admiral Jellicoe advancing with the battle fleet. Into the horns of the horseshoe von Hipper is steaming, with the High Sea Fleet coming up from the south-east.

upon the German battle-cruisers, who began to suffer severely. In the midst of this, at 5.42, came the sound of the *Invincible's* guns attacking the 2nd Scouting Group to the north-eastward; and thereupon, having good reason to feel himself being surrounded by superior forces as well as being mastered in the actual fire-fight, Hipper turned his ships swiftly about and fell back on the High Sea Fleet.

As his opponent turned away to starboard Beatty first conformed, then curled round him due east in the natural movement of the action, and also with the object of preventing Hipper, however he might turn, from discovering the British battle-fleet. It was at this moment that the *Lion* came in sight of the *Iron Duke*. Her appearance was a surprise to Jellicoe. The reckoning from Beatty's wireless signals had led the *Iron Duke* to expect him a good deal farther to the eastward. The cumulative error of the two ships was no less than eleven miles. Fact now instantaneously superseded estimate. There was the *Lion* six miles away and nearly four points more to starboard of the *Iron Duke* than had been supposed. It was reasonable to assume that the enemy's battle-fleet was also and to an equal degree more to the westward; and this meant that Jellicoe would not meet them ahead, or nearly ahead, but obliquely on the starboard bow.

The situation was critical, urgent and obscure. The Commander-in-Chief could feel the enemy's breath all round his right cheek and shoulder, and he now evidently wanted very much to point his fleet to the new direction. But this partial wheel[1] required fifteen minutes, and he had not got them.

As soon as he saw Beatty steaming across his bows in action and at full speed, he flashed the question: "Where is the enemy's battle-fleet?" (6.01). And a minute later, in consequence of Beatty's appearance and position, and not having time to wheel, he turned the leading ships of his divisions southward to improve his line of approach to the enemy by gaining ground in that direction. This movement lost no time and was absolutely right in conception, but it brought his fleet into an échelon formation of divisions which was not at all convenient for deployment, and the German fleet might be very near. At any minute it might emerge from the mist six or seven miles away, and forthwith open fire. And at 6.06 the Commander-in-Chief reverted to his previous formation, which though not pointing true gave him the largest options for deployment.

Meanwhile Beatty, now only two miles ahead of the *Marlborough* (the right-hand corner vessel of the battleship mass), answered: "Enemy's battle-cruisers bearing south-east."[1] On which the Commander-in-Chief repeated, "Where is the enemy's battle-fleet?" To this the *Lion* could give no answer. Hipper had for the moment vanished, and the *Lion* had no enemy in sight.

Need to Deploy the Fleet.

Anxiously peering at the menacing curtains of the horizon or poring over the contradictions and obscurities of the chart, Jellicoe held on his course in tense uncertainty for another eight minutes. Then at last came illumination. At 6.10 the *Barham* had sighted Scheer's battleships to the S.S.E., and as her wireless had been shot away, the *Valiant* passed the news. Jellicoe received it at 6.14. Almost simultaneously the *Lion* reported the High Sea Fleet in sight S.S.W. These two reports placed the enemy four points on the starboard bow, or, in military parlance, half right. The direction was correct. But the leading German battleship *König* was placed three miles nearer than she actually was. On this view further delay seemed impossible. The moment of decision had come. "It became," says the Admiralty Narrative, "urgently necessary to deploy the Fleet."

Jellicoe's Decision.

The meeting having taken place at this unsatisfactory angle, a swift deployment of the Fleet by divisions to port or starboard was not open. It would have

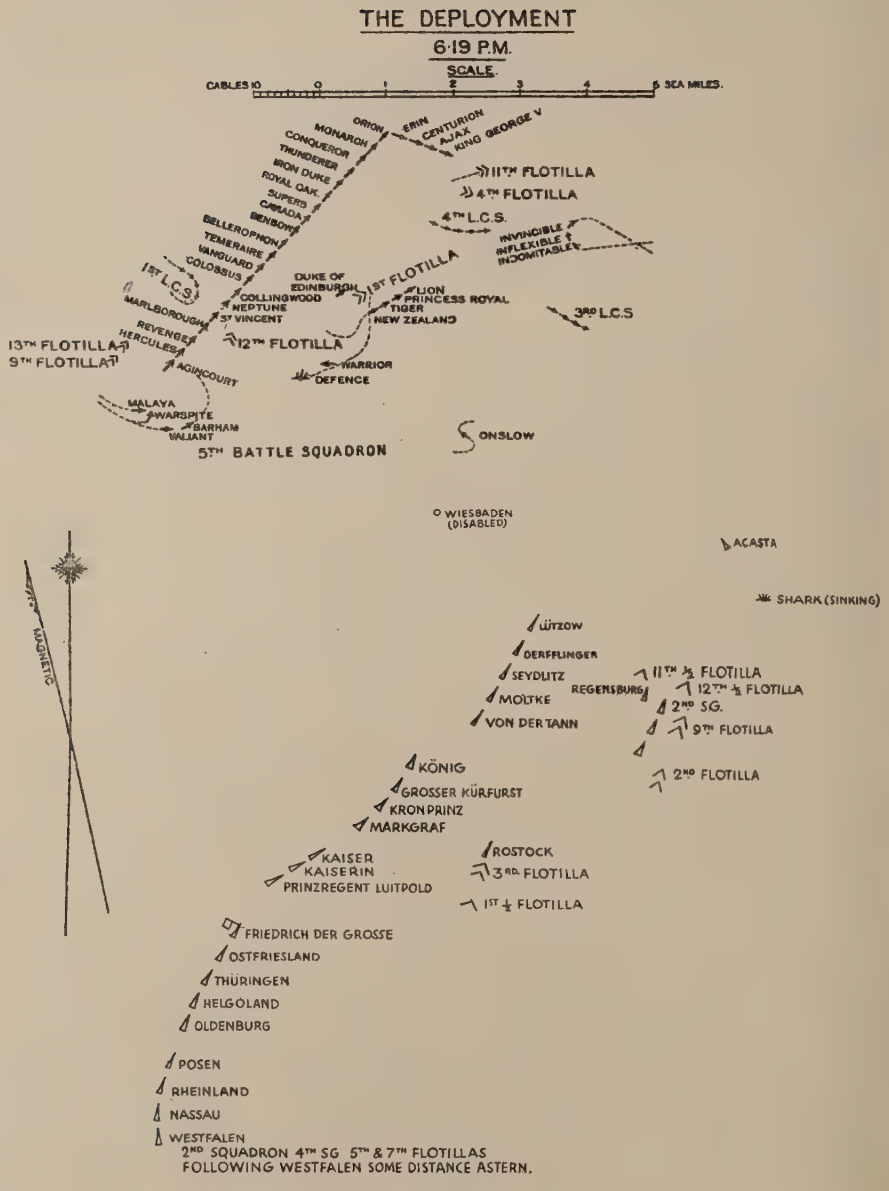
[1] The sailors call it for short "altering the bearing of the guides by (*so many*) points."

[1] Their course was omitted.

From the picture by F. O. Salisbury. Copyright reserved for owners by Royal Academy Illustrated.

BOY 1ST CLASS JOHN TRAVERS CORNWELL, V.C., OF H.M.S. *CHESTER*.

H.M.S. *Chester*, at 5.40 p.m. on May 31, 1916, came under the fire of the four light cruisers of the German 2nd Scouting Group. Her deck became a shambles and nearly all her guns were broken up. Cornwell, the sole survivor of one of the gun crews, was, according to Admiral Beatty's despatch, " mortally wounded early in the action. He nevertheless remained standing alone at a most exposed post, quietly awaiting orders, till the end of the action, with the gun's crew dead and wounded all round him. His age was under 16½ years. I regret that he has since died, but I recommend his case for special recognition in justice to his memory and as an acknowledgment of the high example set by him."



THE DEPLOYMENT: 6.19 P.M.

Positions of the warring Fleets at the time of Admiral Jellicoe's deployment on the port wing. To the northward is the Grand Fleet. It is in the middle of the movement between its original formation of a mass of six columns and the single column of ships which, led by *King George V*, is heading to the south-east. The battle-cruisers are steaming across to take their position at the van The 5th Battle Squadron is taking station in the rear. Coming up from the south is the High Sea Fleet.

brought the Fleet into a line out of proper relation to the enemy's potential battle front. There remained only the twenty-two minutes' method of deployment on the wing. Jellicoe conceived himself limited to two alternatives: either he could let his right-hand column nearest the enemy go ahead and make the others follow it, or he could let his left-hand column farthest from the enemy take the lead. If he chose the former, he ran the risk of the enemy concentrating their fire on his leading ships while the rest of the Fleet could not reply. If he chose the latter, he drew out his line of battle 10,000 yards farther away from the enemy. Instead of deploying into action and opening fire at once, he would deploy outside effective gun range; and his opening movement in the battle would be a retirement.

Our present knowledge leads to the conclusion that he could have deployed on the starboard wing without misadventure. The 5th Battle Squadron, with its unequalled guns, armour and speed, was in fact about to take the van ahead of the *Marlborough's* division of older Dreadnoughts. Beatty's battle-cruisers were already ahead steaming upon the exact course. Still farther ahead in front of all Hood in lively comprehension was about to wheel into the line. The whole Fleet would have drawn out harmoniously into full battle at decisive ranges, with all its fast heavy ships at the right end of the line for cutting the enemy from its base.

The Commander-in-Chief chose the safer course. No one can say that on the facts as known to him at the moment it was a wrong decision. There are ample arguments on either side, and anyhow he was the man appointed to choose. If he had deployed on the wing towards the enemy, and if the leading British squadrons had been overwhelmed by the fire of the German battle-fleet, or if a heavy torpedo attack had developed on the van of the Fleet and if our whole line had thereby been checked and disordered in its deployment, and four or five ships sunk (as might have happened in as many minutes), there would have been no lack of criticism upon the imprudence of the Admiral's decision. And criticism would have been the least of the consequences.

A Third Course.

But there was surely a third course open to Sir John Jellicoe which had none of the disadvantages of these hard alternatives.[1] Although it involved a complicated evolution, it was in principle a very simple course. In fact it was the simplest and most primitive of all courses. He could have deployed on his centre and taken the lead himself. There is a very old and well-known signal in the Royal Navy which would have enabled the Commander-in-Chief to lead his own division out of the mass and make the others follow after him in any sequence he might choose. It was only necessary to hoist the pennant "A" above a succession of numerals indicating the order in which the various divisions should follow. It involved every ship in the two port divisions either reducing speed or making a complete left-handed circle to avoid losing speed, while the starboard divisions were taking their places behind the Commander-in-Chief.

But the Fleet was not under fire, and the manœuvre was practical. It meant in short, "Follow me." Out of a tangle of uncertainties and out of a cruel dilemma here was a sure, prudent and glorious middle course. By adopting it Sir John Jellicoe would have retained the greatest measure of control over his Fleet after deployment. He would have had three miles and ten minutes more to spare than if he had deployed on the wing towards the enemy. He would have avoided any retirement from the advancing foe. He would have led his Fleet, and they would have followed him.

It may seem strange that he should have never attempted to deal with this alternative in any of his accounts and explanations of his actions. It is perhaps easily explained. Sir John Jellicoe was working on a definite preconceived system. In the thunder and mystery of the preliminaries of what might be the greatest sea battle of the world, he held as long as he could rigidly to his rules. All his dispositions for

[1] See diagram on page 863.

A LATER PHASE OF THE BATTLE

This third panoramic picture, taken shortly after those given on pages 848 and 856, shows th up by the bursts of German shells can be appreciated by comparing those on the left of th that the shell-bursts in question are neare

battle had contemplated a deployment either on the port or starboard column of battleships. As a consequence the routine system of signals in the Grand Fleet battle orders did not contemplate any such deployment on the Admiral's flag. The old signal was well known. If hoisted, it would have been instantly comprehended. But it had fallen into desuetude, and it never seems to have occurred to the Commander-in-Chief at the time.

Neglect of the *Queen Elizabeths*.

Equally it did not occur to him to take an obvious precaution against the escape of the enemy which could not have risked the safety of his Fleet. His cautious deployment on the outer wing made it the more imperative to make sure the enemy was brought to battle. To do this he had only to tell the four *Queen Elizabeths* of the 5th Battle Squadron, instead of falling tamely in at the tail of the line and thus wasting all their unique combination of speed and power, to attack separately the disengaged side of the enemy.

These ships would not have been in any danger of being overwhelmed by the numbers of the enemy. They were eight or nine knots faster than Scheer's Fleet as long as it remained united. They could at any moment if too hard pressed break off the action. Thus assured, what could be easier than for them to swoop round upon the old *Deutschland* squadron and cripple or destroy two or three of these ships in a few minutes? It would have been

Photo : A. D. Duckworth, R.N.

-CRUISER ACTION : MAY 31, 1916.

British battle-cruisers still hotly engaged. The enormous height of the columns of water thrown picture with the height above water level of the ships themselves, making allowance for the fact to the camera than the line of ships.

almost obligatory for Scheer to stop and rescue them; and taken between two fires, he would have been irrevocably committed to battle.

This was exactly the kind of situation for which the division of fast super-Dreadnoughts, combining speed, guns and armour in an equal degree, had been constructed at such huge expense and trouble as one of the main acts of my administration of the Admiralty. But neither the Commander-in-Chief nor their own Admiral could think of any better use for them than to let them steam uselessly along in rear of the Fleet at seventeen knots, their own speed being over twenty-four.

Therefore at 6.15 p.m. precisely the order was given by signal and wireless to deploy on the port wing. The fateful flags fluttered in the breeze, and were hauled down. The order became operative, and five-sixths of the immense line of British battleships turned away and began to increase their distance from the enemy. The first move of the Battle Fleet at Jutland had been made.

* * * *

Progress of the Deployment.

Both Beatty and the 5th Battle Squadron had been conveniently placed for a deployment on the starboard wing. The deployment to port forced Beatty to steam at full speed across the front of the line of battle in order to take his position in the van. Hood wheeled into the line ahead of Beatty. The smoke of the battle-cruisers obscured the vision of the battleships, and at 6.26 Jellicoe

reduced the Fleet speed to fourteen knots in order to let the battle-cruisers draw ahead. The signal did not get through quickly, and bunching and overlapping began to occur, particularly at the turning-point. The 5th Battle Squadron, too far behind to cross the front of Jellicoe's deployment and receiving no orders to act independently, decided to take station in rear, and executed a left-handed turn under the concentrated fire both of the German battle-cruisers and the leading German battleships.

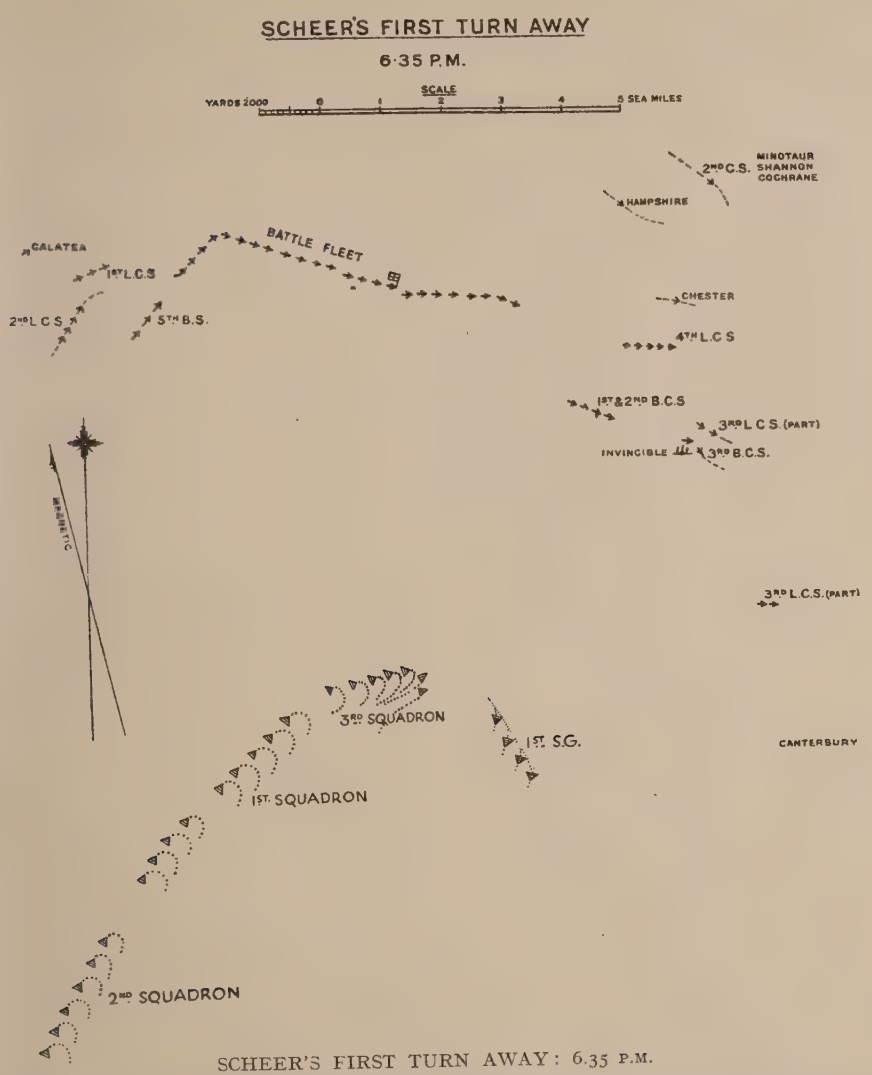
Once more the 15-inch guns and 13-inch armour of the fast battleships came into heavy action against greatly superior forces, and ponderous blows were given and received. The *Warspite*, with her helm temporarily jammed, fell out of the squadron and made a sweeping circle out of control and under intense fire. The circle carried her round the half-wrecked *Warrior*, who in the confusion, blessing her saviour's involuntary chivalry, struggled into safety.

At 6.25, while the deployment was proceeding, the Fleet began to fire, about one-third of the ships finding targets either on the unfortunate *Wiesbaden*, which lay between the lines a flaming wreck, or on the German 3rd Squadron (*Königs*) at the head of the hostile fleet. The range was fouled by smoke, and the visibility poor. But Jellicoe's manœuvre had procured the most favourable light for the British, and only the flashes of their guns could be seen by the enemy. When half the fleet had turned the corner, Jellicoe seems to have thought of coming to closer quarters by altering course by sub-divisions towards the enemy. The L-shape in which the Fleet was then formed probably made him feel that this movement was impracticable, and the signal was cancelled before it was begun. Half the British Fleet was firing by the time the deployment was completed (6.47 p.m.); and the German 3rd Squadron was repeatedly hit, no British battleship being touched in return.

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

H.M.S. *INVINCIBLE* BLOWS UP: 6.31 P.M.

Shortly after 6.30 p.m. on the evening of May 31, whilst Rear-Admiral Hood with the 3rd Battle-Cruiser Squadron was hotly engaged with Hipper's battle-cruisers, his flagship, H.M.S. *Invincible*, met with disaster. A 12-inch shell from the *Derfflinger* struck her amidships and, igniting the magazines of the two midship turrets, caused an explosion which cut her in half. In the photograph the main mast is seen to be falling and the explosion on the foremost turret is just beginning. H.M.S. *Invincible* went down with the Admiral and some 1,020 officers and men out of a total of 1,026.



SCHEER'S FIRST TURN AWAY: 6.35 P.M.

In the chart on page 870 the High Sea Fleet was seen steaming on a north-easterly course. By 6.35 p.m. Scheer, finding himself under fire from the British line of battle and, believing himself about to be enveloped, turned his whole Fleet about. The above chart demonstrates this manœuvre, showing in the lower half of the chart the German ships putting about preparatory to steaming away to the south-west.

Destruction of the *Invincible*—Scheer Turns Away.

Meanwhile Hood with the 3rd Battle-Cruiser Squadron had been engaging Hipper's battle-cruisers with good effect. But at 6.31 a salvo from the *Derfflinger* smote the *Invincible*. In the words of the Official Narrative,

"Several big explosions took place in rapid succession; masses of coal dust issued from the riven hull; great tongues of flame played over the ship; the masts collapsed; the ship broke in two, and an enormous pall of black smoke ascended to the sky. As it cleared away the bow and stern could be seen standing up out

of the water as if to mark the place where an Admiral lay."[1]

Of her crew of 1,026 officers and men, six only survived.

We will now follow for a moment the German movements. Scheer found himself under fire from the British line of battle from 6.25 onwards. He mistook Hood's battle-cruisers for the van of the British line. He thus thought himself about to be enveloped. Instead of executing upon the British the manœuvre of "crossing the T," it seemed that they were about to do this to him. He therefore at 6.35, with the utmost promptitude, turned his whole Fleet about, every ship turning simultaneously, and made off to the westward, *towards England,* launching at the same time a flotilla to cover his retirement by a torpedo attack and smoke screens. This thoroughly practised evolution was performed with success and even precision, in spite of the pressure and disarray of battle. The fleets fell rapidly apart, the Germans faded into a bank of mist, and Scheer found himself alone again.

The Second Opportunity.

But now ensued one of those astounding events utterly outside the bounds of reasonable expectation, which have often been the turning points of history. No sooner did Scheer, after steaming for about twenty minutes to the westward, find himself free, than he turned each ship about right-handed and again steamed eastward. What was his purpose? After getting back to harbour he declared that it was to seek further conflict with the British Fleet. "When I noticed that the British pressure had quite ceased, and that the fleet remained intact in my hands, I turned back under the impression that the action could not end in this way, and that I ought to seek contact with the enemy again."[2] This explanation is endorsed by the German official history.

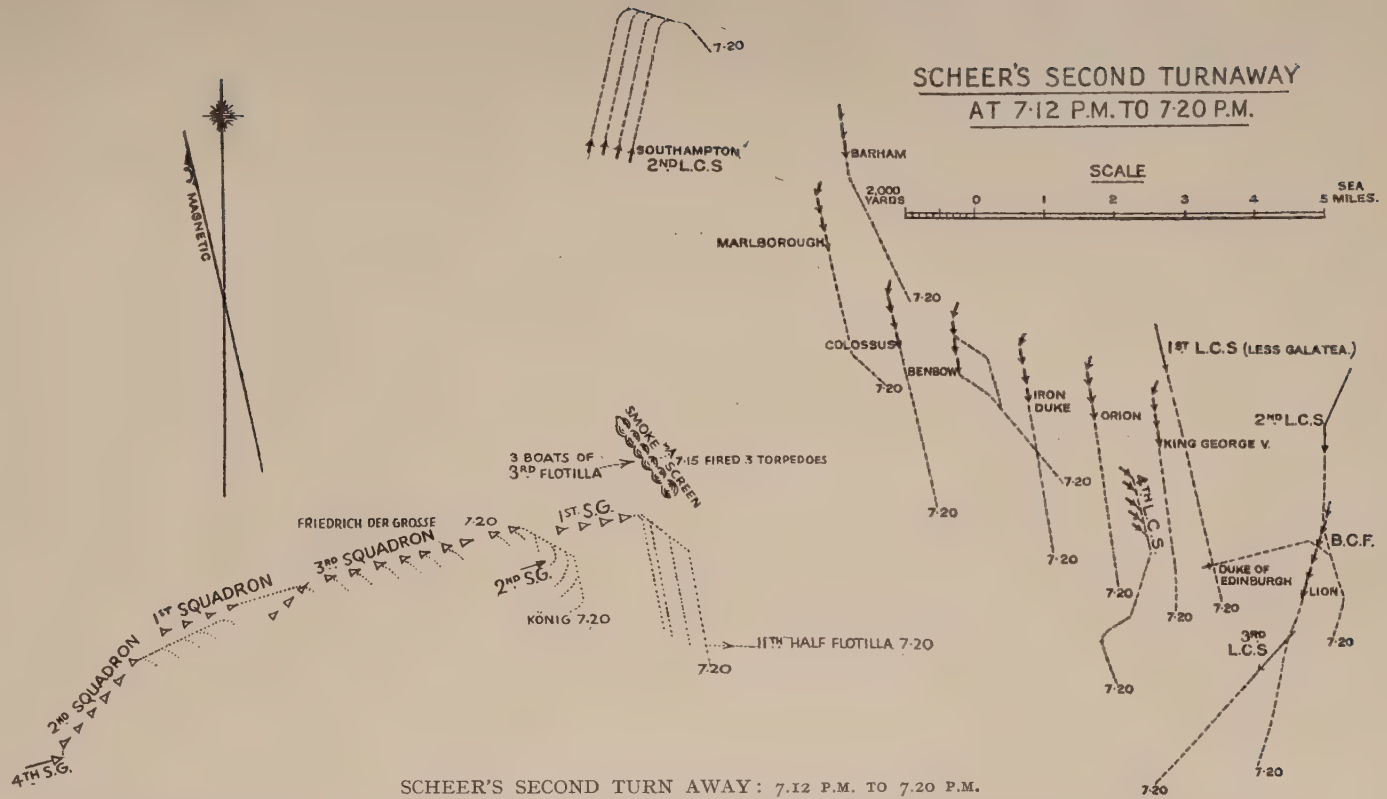
Nevertheless it seems more likely that he calculated that this movement would carry him across the British rear, and that he hoped to pass astern punishing the rear ships and getting again on the homeward side of the battle. We know that he was under the impression that the British battle-cruisers were the van of the British line of battle. From this the conclusion inevitably presented to his mind would be that the British battle-fleet was five miles ahead of its position. On these assumptions his movement would have carried him very nicely across the British tail. Instead of this he ran right into the centre of the whole British Fleet, which was certainly the last thing he sought.

This mistake might well have been fatal to the Germans. It would have been impossible to have chosen a situation of greater peril. Jellicoe's fleet was also no doubt inconveniently arranged. He was steaming south with his divisions in échelon. In fact he now, at 7.12 p.m., was caught by the Germans while he was in the very posture he had so disliked before his original deployment. But nevertheless in practice no serious difficulty arose. As the German ships one after another emerged from the mist, all the British battleships whose range was clear opened a terrific fire upon them. The German van, the formidable *Königs,* saw the whole horizon as far as eye could reach alive with flashes. About six minutes' intense firing ensued. The concussion of the shell storm burst upon the German vessels. Hipper's long-battered but redoubtable scouting group once more bore the brunt. The *Seydlitz* burst into flames; the *Lützow* reeled out of the line. This was the heaviest cannonade ever fired at sea.

Scheer Turns Away Again.

It did not last long. The moment Scheer realized what he had run into, he repeated—though less coolly—the manœuvre he had used at 6.35; and at 7.17 he again turned the battle-fleet about to the westward, launched another series of flotilla attacks, threw up more smoke screens, ordered the gasping battle-cruisers to attack at all costs to cover his retreat (a "Death ride"), and sped again to the west. Jellicoe, obedient to his long-resolved policy, turned away

[1] Pages 49-50.
[2] Official Narrative.



SCHEER'S SECOND TURN AWAY: 7.12 P.M. TO 7.20 P.M.

After steaming to the westward for some twenty minutes Scheer once more changed his course, turning again to the east. His precise purpose in carrying out this manœuvre is not clear and, as stated in the text, it is possible that he hoped to pass astern of the British line. It will be seen from the chart, however, that his course, far from leading him astern of the Grand Fleet, threatens to bring him to immediate action. It will be observed that the Grand Fleet is once more in the formation from which the original deployment was made. Once more Scheer, unwilling to accept battle, turns away.

DARKNESS FALLS AT 9 P.M.

When Scheer, after his second turn away, led the High Sea Fleet westward again and his ships faded from view, the near approach of darkness rendered it extremely improbable that the action would be resumed. In the event this was to be the virtual end of the battle. As night fell the two armadas were driving southward upon a course roughly parallel and barely six miles apart.

from the torpedo stream, first two points and then two points more. Here at any rate was a moment when, as a glance at the map will show, it would have been quite easy to divide the British Fleet, with the 5th Battle Squadron leading the starboard division, and so take the enemy between two fires. But the British Commander-in-Chief was absorbed in avoiding the torpedo attack by turning away. The range opened, the Fleets separated, and Scheer vanished again from Jellicoe's view—this time for ever.

Between 6.0 and 7.30 the German flotillas had delivered no fewer than seven attacks upon the British battle-fleet. The true answer to these attacks was the counter-attack of the British flotillas and Light Cruiser Squadrons, of which latter two were available and close at hand. These should have been ordered to advance and break up the enemy's torpedo craft, as they were fully capable of doing. Instead of using this aggressive parry, Jellicoe turned his battleships away on each occasion; and contact with the enemy ceased. The German flotillas in the whole of this phase lost only a single boat, but they effectively secured the safe withdrawal of their Fleet from the jaws of death.

Beatty Renews the Action.

Beatty however still sought to renew the action. It was above all things important to drive the Germans westward away from home. The *Lion* was in sight of the enemy; but the British battle-fleet was drawing no nearer to her, and it was not possible for the battle-cruisers to engage Scheer single-handed. At 7.45 he signalled the bearing of the enemy through the *Minotaur* to the leading British battleship; and at 7.47 sent the much-discussed message to the Commander-in-Chief, "Submit that the van of the battleships follow me; we can then cut off the enemy's fleet." Almost immediately thereafter he altered course to close the enemy.

Meanwhile Scheer homeward bent had gradually brought the High Sea Fleet from a westerly on to a southerly course. The fleets were once again converging. Light cruisers and destroyers on both sides began to fire. The British battle-cruisers would soon be engaged. Where was the van of our battle-fleet? A quarter of an hour was allowed to pass after Jellicoe received Beatty's signal before he sent the necessary order—and that in no urgent terms—to the 2nd Battle Squadron. Vice-Admiral Jerram commanding that squadron did not increase his speed, did not draw ahead of the main fleet, and did not ask the *Minotaur* for the *Lion's* position. He merely held on his course, in much uncertainty of the general situation. Thus the *Lion* and her consorts were alone in the last as in the first encounter of great ships at Jutland and in the war.

The German battle-cruisers, grievously wounded, were scarcely in a condition to fight, and the light was still favourable to the British. Firing began from the *Tiger* on different ships at ranges from 9,000 to 13,000 yards. One of the two remaining turrets of the *Derfflinger* was put out of action. The *Seydlitz* and *Lützow* could scarcely fire a shot. Suddenly the old Deutschland battleships came to the rescue of Hipper's gallant battered vessels; and the last salvoes of the big guns were exchanged with them in the twilight. After 15 minutes the Germans turned off again to the westward and disappeared in the gathering gloom.

* * * *

Darkness Falls—Scheer's Relief.

Night had now come on, and by nine o'clock darkness had fallen on the sea. Thereupon the conditions of naval warfare underwent profound changes. The rights of the stronger fleet faded into a grey equality. The far-ranging cruisers were blinded. The friendly destroyers became a danger to the ships they guarded. The great guns lost their range. Now, if ever, the reign of the torpedo would begin. The rival Navies, no more than six miles apart, steamed onwards through the darkness, silent and invisible, able to turn about in five minutes or less in any direction, no man knowing what the other would do or what might happen next.

But Admiral Scheer had made up his mind, and his course, though perilous, was plain. He was a man of resolution based on reasoned judgment. He knew that a superior hostile fleet lay between him and home. To be found in that position by the light of another day meant, in all probability, total destruction. The night was short. At half-past two dawn would be breaking. He must act without a moment's delay. His plan was simple: to go home as fast as possible by the shortest route, at all risks and at all costs. If he found the British Fleet in his path, he would crash through it. Many ships would be sunk on both sides, but the bulk of the German Navy would escape to harbour. Anything was better than being caught at sea by an overwhelming force with eighteen hours of battle light before it.

At 9.14 he issued the following order by wireless, "Our own main body is to proceed in. Maintain course S.S.E. ¼ E; speed 16 knots." Accordingly the High Sea Fleet turned from its southerly course, and preceded by its flotillas and light cruiser squadrons, steamed at its fastest united speed straight for the Horn Reef. No one can doubt that he acted rightly.

Jellicoe's Problem.

Sir John Jellicoe's problem was more complicated. He now had the enemy in a position which certainly was no part of any prearranged German plan. He rightly rejected the idea of a night action. Any battle brought on at daybreak would be free from all apprehensions of traps or elaborately prepared ambuscades. It would be a straightforward fight to a finish in blue water; and he was more than twice as strong. His obvious and supreme duty was to compel such a battle. But how?

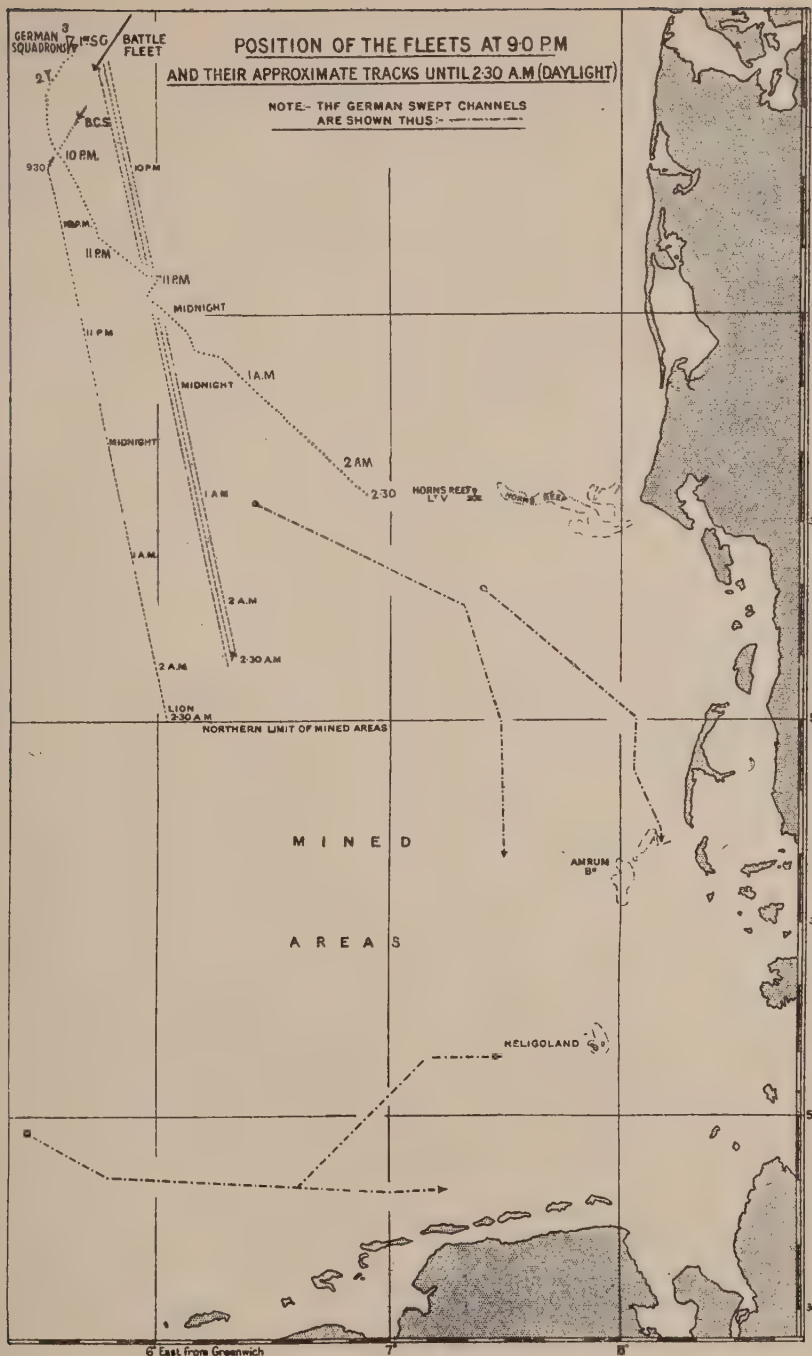
Two minefields had been laid in the Heligoland Bight since the beginning of the war by the Germans to impede an attack by the British Fleet. The Germans had been aided in this task, for reasons requiring more explanation, by the British Admiralty; and in consequence of the exertions of both sides large parts of the Bight were closed by British and German mines. Through these the Germans had swept three broad channels: one to the north by the Horn Reef, one rather more in the centre by Heligoland, and one to the south by the Ems River. Both sides knew a great deal about each other's minefields. They were marked on their charts as clearly as rocks or shoals, and could be avoided with almost equal certainty. But the British Admiralty knew not only the minefields, but all the three German channels through them. Sir John Jellicoe therefore had on his chart all the three passages open to Admiral Scheer marked out before him.

There was also a fourth alternative. Scheer might avoid the Heligoland Bight altogether, and turning northwards as soon as darkness fell, steer homewards through the Kattegat and into the Baltic. Which of these four would he choose? No one in the position of the British Commander-in-Chief could expect to achieve certainty. Whatever decision Jellicoe had taken must have left a number of chances unguarded. All that could be expected of him was to act in accordance with reasonable probability, and leave the rest to Fate. The final question which this chapter must examine is whether he acted upon reasonable probability or not.

The Balance of Probability.

It was possible immediately to eliminate the least likely alternatives open to the enemy. Retreat into the Baltic by the Kattegat gave Scheer no security against being brought to battle in daylight. It involved a voyage of nearly 350 miles, giving the faster British a long day to chase in the open sea. Jellicoe could have provided for this route by the simple process (which he did not however adopt) of sending a few light cruisers to watch the area, and thus ensure timely information at dawn. The Ems route, which was long and roundabout, might also have been dismissed as improbable. Thus the four alternatives could have been reduced to two, i.e. the Horn Reef Channel and the Heligoland channel; and these two were not far apart.

Sir John Jellicoe would have been



JUTLAND: THE FINAL FLEET MOVEMENT.

Chart illustrating the manœuvre which enabled Admiral Scheer to withdraw the High Sea Fleet under cover of darkness to its base. In the top left-hand corner the tracks of both fleets are shown together with their respective positions between 9 p.m., May 31, and 2.30 a.m., June 1, 1916.

justified in considering both the Horn Reef and Heligoland channels as open and likely. On this dual basis however a good movement presented itself. By steering for a point about ten miles to the south-westward of the Horn Reef light he would have been at daybreak in a favourable position to bring Scheer to battle whether he made for the Horn Reef or Heligoland channel. The British Fleet was at least three knots faster than the Germans and was nearer this point when darkness fell.

But Jellicoe seems to have formed the opinion that the alternative lay between the Heligoland channel and the Ems, and he nowhere mentions the possibility of the Horn Reef, which was *prima facie* the most likely. "I was loth," he says,[1] "to forgo the advantage of position, which would have resulted from an easterly or westerly course,[1] and I therefore decided to steer to the southward, where I should be in a position to renew the engagement at daylight, and should also be favourably placed to intercept the enemy should he make for his base by steering for Heligoland or towards the Ems and thence along the north German coast."

This was hardly the most reasonable assumption, and did not gather, but on the contrary excluded, the major favourable chances. To continue on such a course until dawn broke at 2.30 a.m. would carry the British Fleet 43 miles to the south-westward of Horn Reef and 25 miles to the westward of Scheer's direct course to Heligoland, thus failing to procure action in either case. Scheer was left free to retreat by the Horn Reef, Heligoland, or, if he

[1] Commander-in-Chief's Despatches. Jutland Papers, p. 21.

[1] i.e. by his taking an easterly or westerly course.

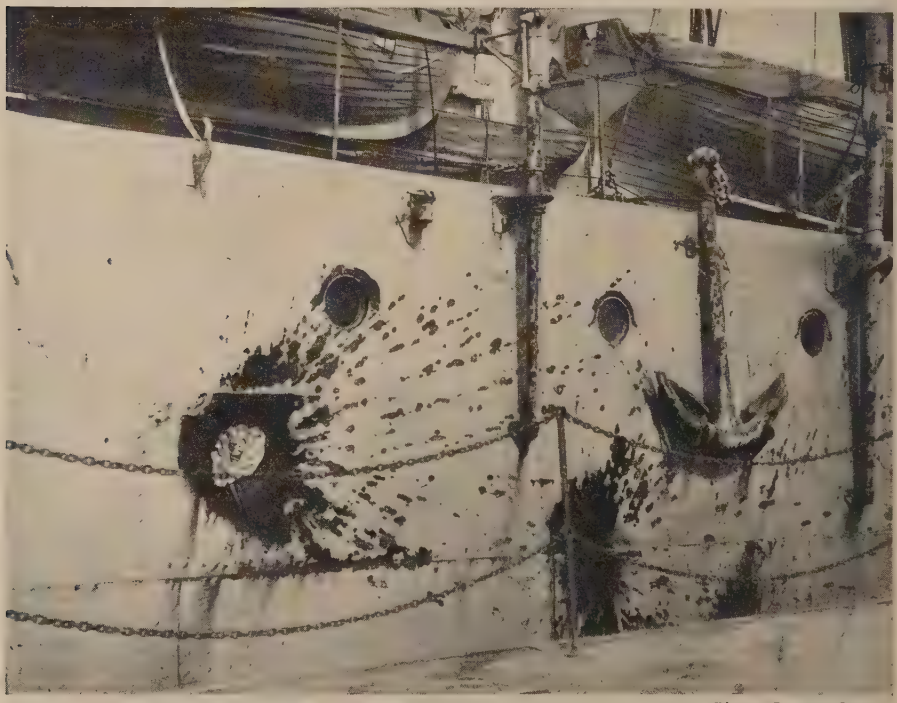


Photo: Central News.

AFTER JUTLAND: DAMAGE FROM SHELL FIRE.

In spite of heavy armour plating which, not so many years ago, would have proved impenetrable, the ships of to-day suffer severely from the heavy armour-piercing projectile employed in modern naval warfare. The above photograph, together with several others reproduced here, was taken some days after the Battle of Jutland when the damaged ships were laid up for repairs.

chose, the Kattegat; and only the much less likely route by the Ems was barred.

The British Flotillas.

At 9.1 p.m. the British battle-fleet turned by divisions and proceeded almost due south at a speed of seventeen knots. At 9.7 p.m. it had assumed its night organization of three columns in close array, and at 9.27 the destroyer flotillas were told to take station 5 miles astern. This order served a double purpose. It freed the battle-fleet during the darkness from the proximity of its own flotillas, and thus enabled it to treat all torpedo craft as foes and sink at sight any that appeared. It also prolonged the British line and thereby increased the chances of intercepting the enemy. No orders to attack the enemy were however given to the flotillas, and they therefore steamed passively along their course without instructions or information. Jellicoe's signal to his flotillas was picked up by the German listening station at Neumünster, which reported to Scheer at 10.10 p.m., "Destroyers have taken up position five miles astern of enemy's main fleet." At about 10.50 p.m. the German 7th Flotilla reported that it had sighted British destroyers. Thus the German Admiral, if the Neumünster message reached him, had from this time forward a fairly clear idea of the relative positions of the two fleets.[1]

[1] It is now said that he did not receive it till he got back to harbour.

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

EFFECT OF A DIRECT HIT ON H.M.S. *TIGER*.

H.M.S. *Tiger* was in the thick of the action of the battle-cruisers at Jutland. As the sketch-map on page 850 shows, she was following H.M.S. *Queen Mary* and, when that fine ship was destroyed, had little time in which to avoid colliding with the wreckage. Such a hit as that shown in the photograph, if at a vulnerable point, might easily cause a disastrous explosion. At the least, apart from the hole itself, plates are started and considerable damage done within the ship.

Here ends the first phase of the night operations. The British Fleet is steaming southward at seventeen knots, and opening to the enemy every moment his two nearest and most likely lines of retreat. The Germans are making for the Horn Reef at sixteen knots, and are about to cut across Jellicoe's tail against which their destroyers have already brushed. There is still time to retrieve the situation.

At about 10.30 p.m. the 4th German Scouting Group came in contact with the British 2nd Light Cruiser Squadron

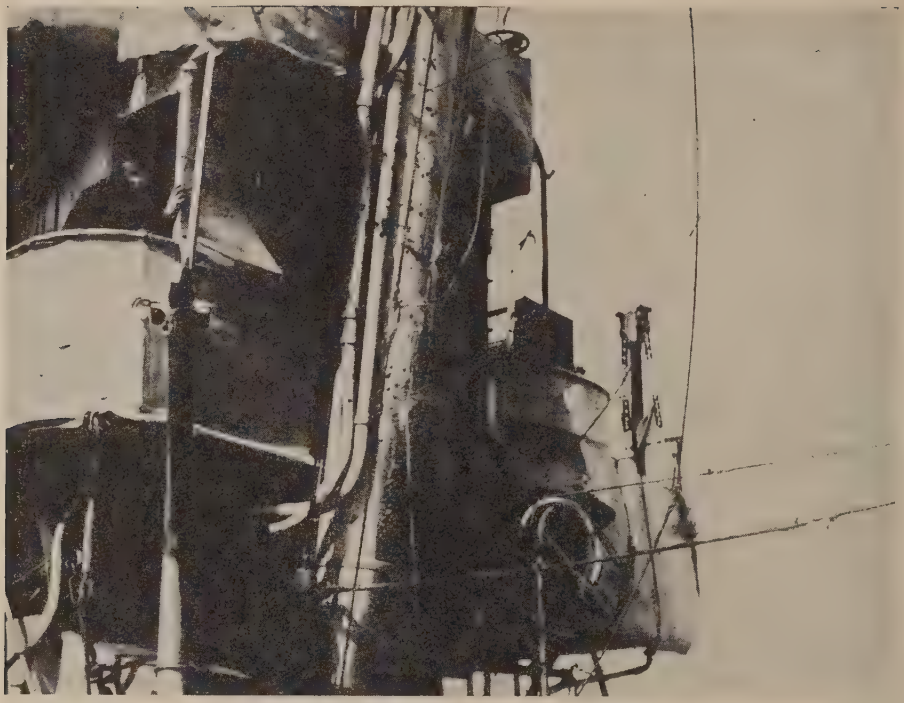


Photo: Central News.

BATTLE-SCARRED UPPER WORKS.

The battle-cruisers and destroyers engaged at Jutland were in the thick of the fighting. As the vanguard of the Grand Fleet this was their function, and few of them emerged from the action entirely unscathed. Here in this photograph is evidence of damage to a ship's upper works.

which was following our battle-fleet. There was a violent explosion of firing. The *Southampton* and the *Dublin* suffered heavy losses, and the old German cruiser *Frauenlob* was sunk by a torpedo. The gun flashes and searchlights of this encounter were noted in the log of nearly every vessel in the Grand Fleet. Firing in this quarter, though it was no proof, at least suggested that the enemy was seeking to pass astern of the British Fleet on the way to the Horn Reef. But confirmation of a decisive character was at hand.

The Admiralty's Decisive Message.

Far away in Whitehall the Admiralty have been listening to the German wireless. They have heard and deciphered Admiral Scheer's order of 9.14 p.m. to the High Sea Fleet. At 10.41 the *Iron Duke,* and about 11.30, after it had been decoded, Sir John Jellicoe received the following electrifying message: "German battle-fleet ordered home at 9.14 p.m. Battle-cruisers in rear. Course S.S.E. 1¼ east. Speed 16 knots."[1] If this message was to be trusted, it meant, and could only mean, that the Germans were returning by the Horn Reef. Taken in conjunction first with the general probabilities and secondly with the firing heard astern, the Admiralty message, unless wholly erroneous, amounted almost to certainty. Had Jellicoe decided to act upon it, he had only to turn his fleet on to a course parallel to the Germans in order to make sure of bringing them to battle at daybreak. By so doing he would neither have risked a night action nor increased the existing dangers of torpedo attack.

But could the Admiralty message be

[1] *Official Narrative,* p. 72.

trusted? Sir John Jellicoe thought not. He no doubt remembered that earlier in the day, a few minutes before the enemy's battle-cruisers were sighted, the same authoritative information had told him that the German High Sea Fleet was probably not at sea as its flagship was speaking from harbour. When Scheer's course as given by the Admiralty was plotted on the *Iron Duke's* chart, it appeared, owing to a minor error, to bring the Germans into almost exactly the position occupied by his own flagship at that moment. This was absurd. Moreover, he had received a report from the *Southampton* timed 10.15 which suggested that the enemy was still to the westward. Generally he considered the position was not clear. He therefore rejected the Admiralty information and continued to steam southward at seventeen knots.

It is difficult to feel that this decision was not contrary to the main weight of the evidence. Certain it is that if Sir John Jellicoe had acted in accordance with the Admiralty message, he would have had—even if that message had proved erroneous—a justification for his action which could never have been impugned. He was leaving so many favourable chances behind him as he sped to the south, and guarding against so few, that it is difficult to penetrate his mind. Full weight must, however, be assigned to the elements of doubt and contradiction which have been described.

Scheer's Escape.

At 11.30 the High Sea Fleet, after some minor alterations in course, crashed into the 4th British Flotilla, and a fierce brief conflict followed. The destroyers *Tipperary* and *Broke* were disabled. The *Spitfire* collided with the

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

REMAINS OF H.M.S. *LION'S* "Q" TURRET.

As will be remembered, H.M.S. *Lion*, Admiral Beatty's flagship, narrowly escaped the fate of the *Queen Mary*. This disaster was averted by the presence of mind of Major Hervey, the officer of the Royal Marine Artillery, commanding "Q" turret. The havoc caused by the shell which plunged down upon the turret is convincingly demonstrated by this photograph, taken in dock after the battle.

battleship *Nassau*, and the *Sparrowhawk* collided with the injured *Broke*. The German cruiser *Elbing* was rammed and disabled by the *Posen*. The *Rostock* was torpedoed. The rest of the British flotilla made off into the night, and turning again on their course, ran a second time into the enemy, when the destroyers *Fortune* and *Ardent* were both sunk by gunfire. A little after midnight the armoured cruiser *Black Prince*, which had become detached from the Fleet and was endeavouring to rejoin, found herself within 1,600 yards of the German super-Dreadnought Squadron, and was instantly blown to pieces; and her crew of 750 men perished without survivors. At 12.25 the head of the German line, which was by now on the port quarter of the British Fleet, cut into the 9th, 10th and 13th British Flotillas and sank the destroyer *Turbulent*.

In these unexpected clashes the British flotillas, following dutifully in the wake of the Grand Fleet, suffered as severely as if they had been launched in an actual attack. The last contact was at 2.10, when the 12th Flotilla sighting the enemy who had now worked right round to port, and led by Captain Stirling with an aggressive intention and definite plan of attack, destroyed the *Pommern* with her entire crew of 700 men, and sank the German destroyer V 4. This was the end of the fighting.

Up till half an hour after midnight there was still time for Jellicoe to reach the Horn Reef in time for a daylight battle. Even after that hour the German rear and stragglers could have been cut off. The repeated bursts of heavy firing, the flash of great explosions, the beams of searchlights—all taking place in succession from west to east—was not readily capable of more than one interpretation. But the Grand Fleet continued steadily on its course to the south; and when it turned northward at 2.30 a.m., the Germans were for ever beyond its reach. The northern course also carried the British Fleet away from the retreating enemy, and it is clear that from this time onward the Commander-in-Chief had definitely abandoned all expectation of renewing the action. It remained only to collect all forces, to sweep the battle area on the chance of stragglers, and to return to harbour. This was accordingly done.

Nobody's Victory.

So ended the Battle of Jutland. The Germans loudly proclaimed a victory. There was no victory for anyone; but they had good reason to be content with their young Navy. It had fought skilfully and well. It had made its escape from the grip of overwhelming forces, and in so doing had inflicted heavier loss in ships and men than it had itself received.

The British Battle Fleet was never seriously in action. Only one ship, the *Colossus*, was struck by an enemy shell, and out of more than 20,000 men in the battleships only two were killed and five wounded. To this supreme instrument had been devoted the best of all that Britain could give for many years. It was vastly superior to its opponent in numbers, tonnage, speed, and above all gun power, and was at least its equal in discipline, individual skill and courage. The disappointment of all ranks was deep; and immediately there arose reproaches and recriminations, continued to this day, through which this account has sought to steer a faithful and impartial passage. All hoped that another opportunity would be granted them, and eagerly sought to profit by the lessons of the battle. The chance of an annihilating victory had been perhaps offered at the moment of deployment, had been offered again an hour later when Scheer made his great miscalculation and for the third time when a little before midnight the Commander-in-Chief decided to reject the evidence of the Admiralty message. Three times is a lot.

* * * *

The German Sortie of August 19.

Nevertheless one last chance of bringing the German Fleet to action was offered. Within six weeks of Jutland, on the evening of August 18, Admiral Scheer again put to sea. His object was to bombard Sunderland; and his hope to draw the British Fleet, if it intervened,

into his U-boat flotillas. His main flotilla of seventeen U-boats was disposed in two lines on the probable tracks of the British Fleet, one off Blyth and one off the Yorkshire coast; while twelve boats of the Flanders flotilla were stationed off the Dutch coast. Four Zeppelins patrolled between Peterhead and Norway; three off the British coast between Newcastle and Hull, and one in the Flanders Bight. The German Second Battle Squadron, composed of the slow *Deutschlands,* was on this occasion not allowed to accompany the Fleet. Thus protected by the airships, bristling with U-boats, and unencumbered by their older vessels, the Germans steamed boldly on their course.

The preliminary German movements had not passed unnoticed by the Admiralty; and during the forenoon of the 18th the Grand Fleet Battle Squadrons were ordered to rendezvous in the "Long Forties," the battle-cruisers to join further south, and the Harwich force to rendezvous to the eastward of Yarmouth. Twenty-six British submarines—five in the Heligoland Bight, eight in the Flanders Bight, one off the Dutch coast and twelve off Yarmouth and Tyne—were in their turn spread to intercept the enemy.

The Achievement of U 52.

The movements of the two Fleets during the 19th are shown in broad outline on the chart on page 891. The day's operations were heralded by submarine attacks on both sides. At 5.5 a.m. the German battleship *Westfalen* was hit by a torpedo from the British submarine E 23, and she turned for home at 7.22. Admiral Scheer held steadily on his course with the remainder of the Fleet. About 6 a.m. the *Nottingham,* one of Beatty's advanced line of cruisers, was struck by two torpedoes from U52, was hit again at 6.25, and sank at 7.10. At first there was some doubt whether she had been sunk by mine or torpedo. But at 6.48 a report from the *Southampton* was received by the Flagship, the *Iron Duke,* making it certain that the *Nottingham* had been sunk by a torpedo. About the same time a signal was received from the Admiralty, fixing the position of the German Fleet. Sir John Jellicoe however appears to have remained under the impression that the *Nottingham* had been destroyed by a mine. He consequently suspected a trap; and at 7 a.m. he turned the Grand Fleet about and steamed to the northward for over two hours, until 9.8 a.m.

It is not clear, even on the assumption that the *Nottingham* had been sunk by a mine, why this manœuvre was necessary. A comparatively slight alteration of course would have carried the Grand Fleet many miles clear of the area of the suspected minefields, and the possibility of getting between the German Fleet and home presented itself. Such a situation had been foreseen in the Note which, with the concurrence of the First Sea Lord, I had sent to Sir John Jellicoe at the beginning of the war (August 8, 1914).

"Their Lordships would wish to emphasize that it is not part of the Grand Fleet's duty to prevent such raids, but to deal with the enemy's Battle Fleet. . . . They [the enemy] may expect you to come direct to prevent the raid, and therefore may lay one or more lines of mines across your expected course or use their submarines for the same purpose; whereas if you approached them from an eastward or a north-eastward direction, you would cut the whole Fleet from its base . . . and you would approach by a path along which the chance of meeting mines would be sensibly reduced. In our mind therefore you should ignore the raid or raids and work by a circuitous route so as to get between the enemy's Fleet or covering force and home."

U52 had however struck harder than she knew. It took two hours after the Grand Fleet turned again towards the enemy to recover the lost ground. So that in all four hours were lost and the chance of cutting off the High Sea Fleet seriously reduced.

It cannot however be said that this was the cause of preventing battle. An accident of a different character was to intervene. Admiral Tyrwhitt with the Harwich force was meanwhile cruising near the southern rendezvous. During the afternoon Scheer received

THE

A dramatic picture from the brush of the late W. L. Wyllie, R.A., and another example of
Dardanelles," was given on page 603. H.M.S. *Lion* is seen here after the battle, near the m
surrounding the disabled flagship. This picture, like tha

After the painting by W. L. Wyllie, R.A.

ED LION.

fine work of this painter of ships and the sea. A previous reproduction, " Spotting for the Fleet : of the Firth of Forth. The massive framework of the Forth Bridge towers above the destroyers page 603, is reproduced here by the courtesy of Mrs. M. A. Wyllie.

five airship reports—one of the Grand Fleet and four of the Harwich force. He also received three submarine reports about the Grand Fleet. The British forces to the north-west all seemed to be steaming away from him as if some concentration were taking place in that direction. At 12.35 p.m. however the German airship L13 reported strong British forces about seventy miles to the southward, and that these had been seen coming north at 11.30 a.m. This was of course the Harwich force. Admiral Scheer jumped to the conclusion that it was the Grand Fleet and that his retreat was compromised. He thereupon turned completely about at 1.15 and after waiting for his battle-cruisers to get ahead of him steamed for home.

Meanwhile Sir John Jellicoe, having recovered his lost distance, and having received at 1.30 p.m. a signal from the Admiralty fixing the position of the German Flagship at 12.33, was now proceeding at 19 knots towards the area which Scheer had just vacated. The chart on board the *Iron Duke* seemed to indicate that a fleet action was imminent, and every preparation was made by Sir John Jellicoe to engage the enemy. After advancing for nearly two hours in full readiness for action, with the battle-cruisers on his starboard and the 5th Battle Squadron on his port bow, he still saw nothing of the enemy. At 3.57 all hope of meeting the Germans was abandoned and the Grand Fleet turned again homeward, losing on the way another light cruiser, the *Falmouth*, by a U-boat torpedo. At about 6 o'clock the Harwich force sighted the German Fleet. But the Grand Fleet was too far off to offer them any support, and at 7 p.m. Admiral Tyrwhitt turned for his base, and thus the operations of August 19 came to an end.

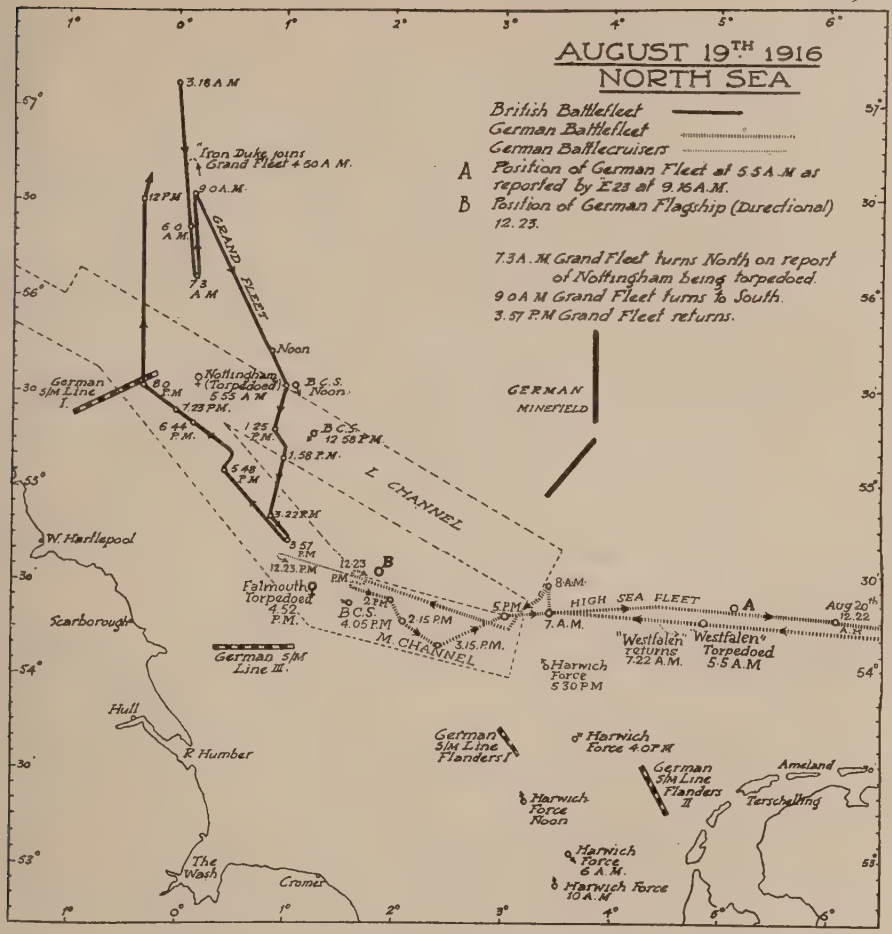
* * * *

Some Conclusions—
The Battle-Cruiser Type.

I feel it unfitting to end this chapter without drawing some conclusions from the events it has attempted to describe. First: Material. What was the cause of the swift destruction of the three British battle-cruisers? The side armour of the *Invincible* was only from 6 to 7 inches thick. She was in action at under 10,000 yards range, and her magazines may well have been exploded by heavy shells which directly pierced her armour belt. But the *Queen Mary* was fighting at over 18,000 yards range when the fatal salvo struck her. She was in her place in the line undamaged, steaming 25 knots and firing from all her guns, a minute or two before she blew up. The *Indefatigable* succumbed at the same extreme range as easily. There can be only two possible explanations. Either the magazines had been penetrated by a shell, or a shell bursting in the turret had ignited the ammunition there, and the flash and flame had roared down the 60-foot hoist into the magazines.

There is no doubt that the magazines of British battle-cruisers were not sufficiently protected against long-range fire. The ranges at which the sea battles of the Great War were fought were vastly greater than any contemplated before the war. Our Naval Constructors had not therefore taken sufficient account of the plunging character of the fire to which the decks and turret roofs would be subjected. The German battle-cruiser armour was better distributed. Moreover, the British battle-cruisers, as developed by Fisher and to a large extent by Jellicoe, though more heavily gunned were less strongly armoured than their German compeers.

Casting a new eye on naval architecture in 1911, I had recoiled from the battle-cruiser type. To spend in those days two million pounds upon a vessel of the greatest power and speed which could not face a strong battleship seemed to me a fruitless proceeding. I therefore opposed the increase of the battle-cruiser class in which we already had superiority, and succeeded in persuading the Board of Admiralty to cancel the battle-cruiser projected for the programme of 1912, and to build instead of one battle-cruiser and four slow battleships the five fast battleships of the *Queen Elizabeth* design. I also excluded the annual battle-cruiser from the programmes of 1913 and 1914.



NORTH SEA: AUGUST 19, 1916.

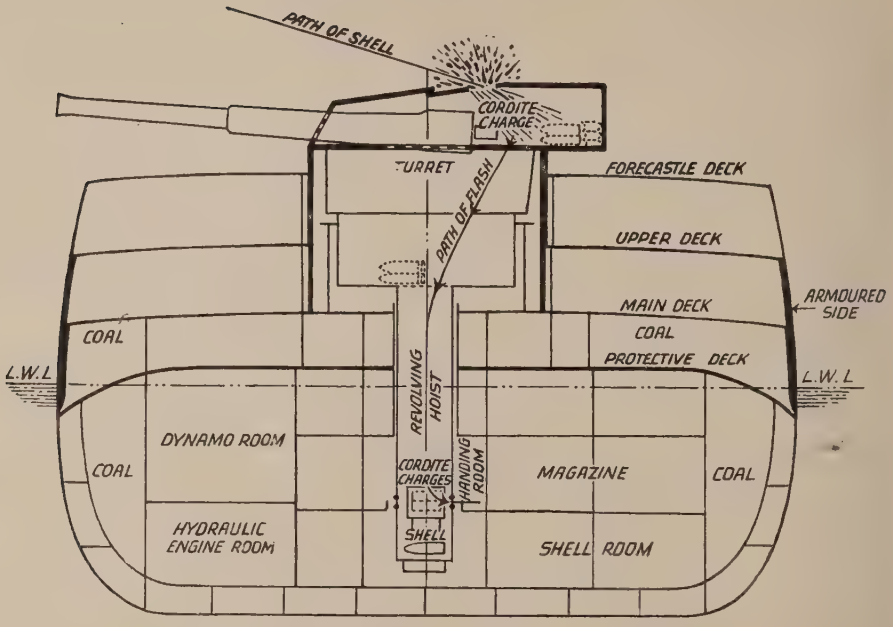
Movements of the British and German fleets on the occasion of the German attempt to reach and bombard Sunderland. Here again, as at Jutland, Scheer was in jeopardy, and it will be seen from the chart and from the account in the text that but for Jellicoe's turn to the northward at 7.3 a.m., the long awaited naval battle must have been joined shortly after noon.

The Flash Danger.

Nevertheless it is more likely that the *Queen Mary* and *Indefatigable* were destroyed by flash down the turret ammunition hoists than by penetration of their decks. The roofs of the gun-houses directly exposed to plunging fire were only 3 inches thick. From the working chambers of these turrets the ammunition tube led directly to the handling-room outside the magazine 60 feet below.

The danger of the flash of an explosion passing down this tube had from the earliest days of modern ironclads always been recognized. Competition in gunnery practices between ships in peace time had however led to the omission of various precautions. The magazine doors at the bottom of the tube were not doubled. One of them could not therefore be kept always closed in action. Nor were they even shrouded by thick curtains of felt. The shutter which closed the hoist in which the charge was lifted had in some cases been removed for the sake of greater rapidity in loading.

A free and easy habit of handling cordite in large quantities had grown up.



SECTION OF WARSHIP IN WAY OF TURRET.

It is believed that the loss of the *Queen Mary* and the *Indefatigable* was, in all probability, due to a flash of cordite down the ammunition hoists to the magazine. The above diagram shows how such a disaster may be caused. The armour-plating of the gun-house roofs was only 3 inches thick, quite insufficient to resist the plunging stroke of a heavy shell.

The silk coverings of the British charges did not give the same security against fire as did the German brass cartridge cases, albeit that these had other disadvantages. All down the tube from the breech of the gun to the magazine, at least four double cordite charges made a complete train of explosive. The flash of a heavy shell exploding in the gun house, or of a fire starting in the cordite charges there, might in these circumstances be carried almost simultaneously into the very magazine itself. Here is the most probable cause of the destruction both of the *Queen Mary* and the *Indefatigable,* and we know how nearly the *Lion* shared their fate.

Against this danger the Germans were forewarned and forearmed by an incident in the Dogger Bank action of January, 1915. A 13·5-inch shell had penetrated the after turret of the *Seydlitz,* setting fire to the charges and to a small "ready magazine." A vast flame enveloped the turret and spread through the passages to the next, gutting both turrets completely and killing over two hundred men. This lesson led to drastic changes in the protection of the German ammunition supply and in drill, similar to those introduced into British ships after Jutland.

British and German Shells.

It was always argued by the naval experts that although the later German battle-cruisers—about which we were not ill-informed—carried more armour than their British opposite numbers, this advantage was more than counterbalanced by our having far heavier guns and shells. It was however proved by the test of battle that the British heavy armour-piercing shell was inferior to the German shell of *equal size* in carrying its explosion through the armour. Such a result should for ever banish complacency from the technical branches of our Naval Ordnance Department, and should lead successive Boards of Admiralty repeatedly to canvass and overhaul the scientific data with which they are pre-

sented and to compare them in an open-minded mood with foreign practices.

What bearing had these deficiencies upon the chances of a general fought-out Fleet battle? This question is at once fundamental and capable of decisive answer.

On no occasion either at the Dogger Bank or Jutland did even the heaviest German shell succeed in penetrating British armour over 7½ inches thick. All hits made on 9-inch armour were effectually resisted by the plate. The vitals of all British battleships engaged at Jutland were protected by 13-inch, 12-inch, 11-inch, or at the very least 9-inch armour. It follows that if the main British Battle Fleet had been seriously engaged at Jutland—apart from the ill-luck of an occasional flash carried down an ammunition hoist—it would not have suffered severely from German shell fire.

We know that the main armaments and engines of the four *Queen Elizabeths* were undamaged after coming under a heavy fire from all the strongest vessels of the German battle-fleet as well as from the German battle-cruisers. Out of five hits of 12-inch shell on their heavy armour, none penetrated. The roof of one of the *Malaya's* turrets (4½ inches) was hit by a heavy projectile without any damage being done. It may therefore be concluded that the armoured protection of the British Battle Fleet was ample to resist the 12-inch shell of the heaviest German guns afloat at Jutland.

On the other hand, at the Dogger Bank a British 13·5-inch shell pierced and burst inside the 9-inch armour of one of the *Seydlitz's* turrets; and at Jutland a British 15-inch shell penetrated the 10-inch armour on the front of the *Seydlitz's* "D" turret, and a 13·5-inch shell penetrated her 9-inch armour. In these two latter cases however the force of the

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

ANTI-FLASH EQUIPMENT.

Every possible precaution is now taken against danger from flash. Here men engaged in passing charges to the gunners are shown wearing the special equipment issued for this and similar duties. Charges are being passed through a thick curtain. The protective head coverings for the men are of stockingette and the gauntlets of asbestos.

explosion was expended outside. The *Lützow* at Jutland showed similar results. At least one 13·5-inch shell penetrated and burst inside 8-inch or 12-inch armour, while another drove in a 10-inch turret plate, causing a fire in the turret. At least one 15-inch shell penetrated and burst inside a 10-inch or 12-inch turret plate of the *Derfflinger*, causing a terrific fire which completely gutted the turret. Such were the results obtained in the two Fleets engaging at long range. It would be easy to add to these examples. Had the battle been fought to a conclusion at medium or shorter range, the penetration of the guns on both sides would have increased; but the superior relation of the heavier British shell would at every stage have been maintained.

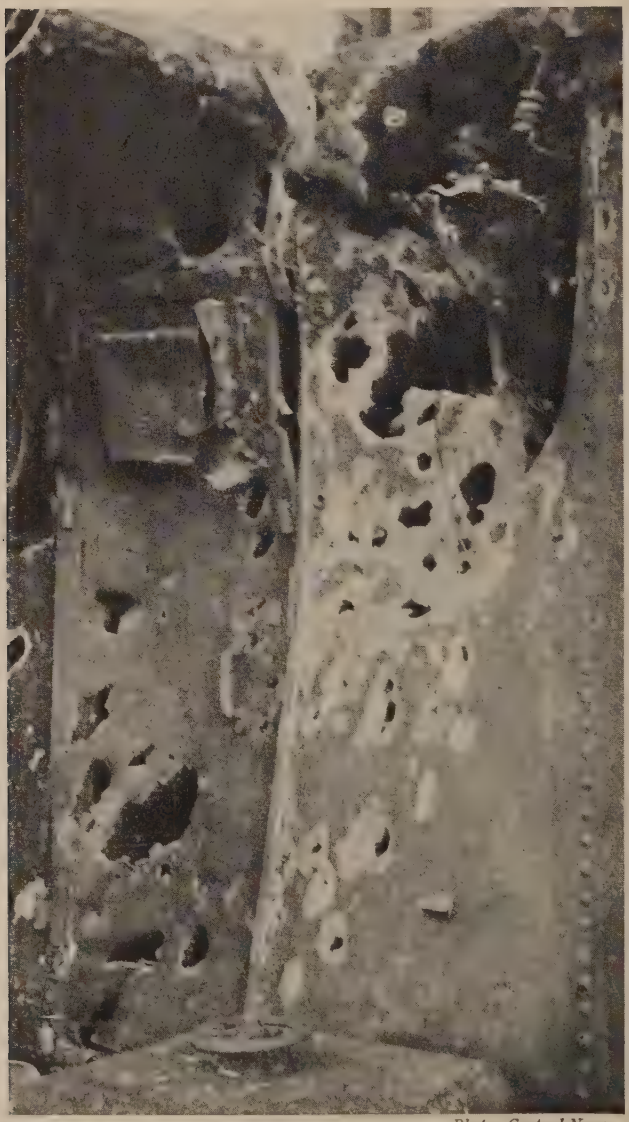


Photo: Central News.

THE EFFECT OF SHELL SPLINTERS.

The twisted and riddled remains of the thin metal walls and door of the chart-house on board a ship that fought at Jutland. During action the navigators carry out their duties under cover of the thick armour of the conning tower. The chart-house is reserved for everyday use under peace conditions.

It is upon this basis of ascertained fact that the numerical strength of the rival Fleets must be considered. The British superiority in the line of battle of 37 Dreadnought ships to 21 German similar units and the double weight of the British broadside were factors which may justly be described as overwhelming. The margin of safety both in numbers and in gun power was so large as to reduce the important defects mentioned to a minor scale and to make full allowance against accidents.

Tactics.

In the sphere of tactics it is evident that the danger of under-water damage by mine or torpedo, the danger of "losing half the fleet before a shot is fired," dominated the mind of the British Commander-

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

H.M.S. *CHESTER* AFTER JUTLAND.

It is described in the text how, at about 5.40 p.m. on May 31, 1916, H.M.S. *Chester*, while reconnoitring for Admiral Hood, came into contact with von Hipper's 2nd Scouting Group, and was almost immediately smothered in a hail of fire. Her guns were broken up and her deck became a shambles. The damage done to this vessel, the ship upon which was Jack Cornwell, V.C. (see page 869), was crippling. The photograph reproduced above is evidence of the shelling to which the *Chester* was exposed.

in-Chief. This danger, though less great than was supposed at the time, was nevertheless real and terrible. Coupled with a true measure of the disproportionate consequences of battle to the rival navies, it enforced a policy of extreme caution upon Sir John Jellicoe. This policy was deliberately adopted by him after prolonged thought, and inflexibly adhered to, not only before and during the encounter at Jutland but afterwards. The policy cannot be condemned on account of the unsatisfying episodes to which it led, without due and constant recognition of the fatal consequences which might have followed from the opposite course or from recklessness. Admitting this however to the full, it does not cover several of the crucial Jutland situations, nor that which arose in the German sortie of August 19.

Tactical movements lay open on these occasions to the Grand Fleet for gripping the enemy without in any way increasing the risk of being led into an under-water trap. A more flexible system of Fleet training and manœuvring would have enabled these moves to be made. The attempt to centralize in a single hand the whole conduct in action of so vast a fleet failed. The Commander-in-Chief, with the best will in the world, could not see or even know what was going on. No attempt was made to use the fast division of battleships (*Queen Elizabeths*) to engage the enemy on the opposite side and hold him up to the battle. The British light cruiser squadrons and flotillas were not used as they ought to have been to parry and rupture hostile torpedo attacks, but these were dealt with merely by the passive turn away of the whole Fleet. The sound and prudent reasoning of the Commander-in-Chief against being led into traps did not apply to situations where the enemy was obviously himself surprised, separated from his harbours, and dealing with utterly unforeseen and unforeseeable emergencies. Praiseworthy caution had induced a defensive habit of mind and scheme of tactics which hampered the Grand Fleet even when the special conditions enjoining the caution did not exist.

The Future.

The ponderous, poignant responsibilities borne successfully, if not triumphantly, by Sir John Jellicoe during two years of faithful command, constitute unanswerable claims to the lasting respect of the nation. But the Royal Navy must find in other personalities and other episodes the golden links which carried forward through the Great War the audacious and conquering traditions of the past; and it is to Beatty and the battle-cruisers, to Keyes at Zeebrugge, to Tyrwhitt and his Harwich striking force, to the destroyer and submarine flotillas out in all weathers and against all foes, to the wild adventures of the Q-ships, to the steadfast resolution of the British Merchant Service, that the eyes of rising generations will turn.

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

4TH BATTLE SQUADRON AT SEA.

The 4th Battle Squadron of the Grand Fleet was commanded at Jutland by Admiral Sturdee. This squadron included *Royal Oak, Superb, Canada, Benbow, Bellerophon, Téméraire, Vanguard,* and the Fleet flagship *Iron Duke.*

CHAPTER LX

THE BATTLE OF THE SOMME

" Pray God that you may never know
The Hell where youth and laughter go."
SIEGFRIED SASSOON.

Strength of the German Line—Absence of Surprise—Objectives of July 1—Opening of the Battle—The 8th Division—Through German Eyes—Tragedy—The Greatest British Loss in History—The Battle sinks to a Minor Scale—Its Obstinate Prolongation—The Anatomy of the Battlefield—Conditions become More Equal—The Strain on the Enemy—The Exposure of the Tanks—Their Effect—My Memorandum of August 1, 1916—The Question of Relative Losses—Accuracy of its Figures—Actual British and German Losses—Criticism of Results—Soothing Information—Inexorable Forces—Glory of the Troops.

A SENSE of the inevitable broods over the battlefields of the Somme. The British armies were so ardent, their leaders so confident, the need and appeals of our Allies so clamant, and decisive results seemingly so near, that no human power could have prevented the attempt. All the spring the French had been battling and dying at Verdun, immolating their manhood upon that anvil-altar; and every chivalrous instinct in the new British armies called them to the succour of France, and inspired them with sacrifice and daring.

Strength of the German Line.

Brusilov's surprising successes redoubled, if that were possible, the confidence of the British Generals. They were quite sure they were going to break their enemy and rupture his invading lines in France. They trusted to the devotion of their troops, which they knew was boundless; they trusted to masses of artillery and shells never before accumulated in war; and they launched their attack in the highest sense of duty and the strongest conviction of success.

The military conceptions underlying the scheme of attack were characterized by simplicity. The policy of the French and British Commanders had selected as the point for their offensive what was undoubtedly the strongest and most perfectly defended position in the world.

" During nearly two years' preparation "[1] (writes Sir Douglas Haig) " he (the enemy) had spared no pains to render these defences impregnable. The first and second systems each consisted of several lines of deep trenches, well provided with bomb-proof shelters and with numerous communication trenches connecting them. The front of the trenches in each system was protected by wire entanglements, many of them in two belts forty yards broad, built of iron stakes interlaced with barbed wire, often almost as thick as a man's finger.

" The numerous woods and villages in and between these systems of defence had been turned into veritable fortresses. The deep cellars usually to be found in the villages, and the numerous pits and quarries common to a chalk country, were used to provide cover for machine guns and trench mortars. The existing cellars were supplemented by elaborate dug-outs, sometimes in two storeys, and these were connected up by passages as much as thirty feet below the surface of the ground. The salients in the enemy's line, from which he could bring enfilade fire across his front, were made into self-contained forts, and often protected by mine-fields; while strong redoubts and concrete machine-gun emplacements had been constructed in positions from which

[1] *Sir Douglas Haig's Despatches:* J. H. Boraston, pp. 22-3.

he could sweep his own trenches should these be taken. The ground lent itself to good artillery observation on the enemy's part, and he had skilfully arranged for cross-fire by his guns.

"These various systems of defence, with the fortified localities and other supporting points between them, were cunningly sited to afford each other mutual assistance and to admit of the utmost possible development of enfilade and flanking fire by machine guns and artillery. They formed, in short, not merely a series of successive lines, but one composite system of enormous depth and strength.

"Behind his second system of trenches, in addition to woods, villages, and other strong points prepared for defence, the enemy had several other lines already completed; and we had learnt from aeroplane reconnaissance that he was hard at work improving and strengthening these and digging fresh ones between them, and still farther back."

All these conditions clearly indicated to the Staffs a suitable field for our offensive, and it was certain that if the enemy were defeated here, he would be more disheartened than by being overcome upon some easier battle-ground.

Sir Douglas also describes his own preparations, which were thorough and straightforward[1]:

"Vast stocks of ammunition and stores of all kinds had to be accumulated beforehand within a convenient distance of our front. To deal with these many miles of new railways—both standard and narrow gauge—and trench tramways were laid. All available roads were improved, many others were

[1] *Ibid.*, p. 21.

Photo: Copyright.

ZERO HOUR ON THE SOMME.

On the morning of July 1, 1916, the hour arrived for which thousands of men had trained and waited. A seven days' bombardment preceded the Somme attack and from 6.25 a.m. onwards, on July 1, the British gunfire became exceptionally severe. Eight minutes before zero the Stokes mortars began to fire at 30 rounds a minute and added their quota to what at that time was an unprecedented volume of fire. At 7.30 a.m., according to the Official History, "wave after wave of British infantry rose and with bayonets glistening moved forward into a blanket of smoke and mist."

Photo: Copyright.

IN THE GERMAN LINE: CLEANING UP.

The artillery fire directed upon the German line on the Somme was so intense that little real resistance to the infantry advance was anticipated. Such hopes were to prove vain. With their customary thoroughness the Germans had provided their positions with such ample underground protection that at many points the trench garrison sustained the British gunfire with little or no loss. When the infantry assault was finally delivered it was met, not by demoralised and shattered defenders, but by resolute and determined machine-gun crews. In many cases it was necessary to clear the deep dug-outs lest isolated parties of the enemy might remain hidden to fire upon the British infantry from the rear.

made, and long causeways were built over marshy valleys. . . . Scores of miles of deep communication trenches had to be dug, as well as trenches for telephone wires, assembly and assault trenches, and numerous gun emplacements and observation posts."

Absence of Surprise.

Thus there was no chance of surprise. Nothing could be introduced to obscure the plain trial of strength between the armies, or diminish the opportunities for valour on the part of the assaulting troops. For months the Germans had observed the vast uncamouflaged preparations proceeding opposite the sector of attack. For a week a preliminary bombardment of varying but unexampled intensity had lashed their trenches with its scourge of steel and fire. Crouched in their deep chalk caves the stubborn German infantry, short often through the cannonade of food and water, awaited the signal to man their broken parapets. The lanes which the British shrapnel had laboriously cut through their barbed-wire entanglements were all carefully studied, and machine guns were accurately sited to sweep them or traverse the approaches with flanking fire. Even one machine gun in skilled resolute hands might lay five hundred men dead and dying on the ground; and along the assaulted front certainly a thousand such weapons scientifically related in several lines of defence awaited their prey. Afar the German gunners, unmolested by counter-battery, stood ready to release their defending barrages on the British front

lines, on their communication trenches and places of assembly.

Objectives of July 1.

Colonel Boraston's account is studiously vague as to the objectives sought for by his Chief on July 1. The plan of the British and French was admittedly to pierce the whole German trench system on a front of many kilometres, and then by wheeling outwards—the British to the north-east and north and the French to the south-east—to roll up from the flanks the exposed portions of the German line; and British and French cavalry divisions were held ready to be pushed forward through the gap so made.

The French objective was to gain the rising ground east of the Somme south of Péronne, while "the corresponding British objective" was "the semicircle of high ground running from the neighbourhood of Le Transloy through Bapaume to Achiet-le-Grand."[1] But these objectives, says Colonel Boraston, were not expected to be reached in the first assault. "These Somme positions were objectives for the armies concerned rather than for the troops from time to time engaged in the attack. They marked the stage at which it was thought that the penetration would be deep enough . . . to enable the Allied Armies to turn their attention to the second stage of the battle, that is to say, the rolling up of the German forces on the flank of the point of rupture."[2]

It was certainly contemplated from the beginning that the battle would be long and hard fought; but it will be seen that the time factor is thus left altogether indefinite. One remains under the impression that it was comparatively immaterial whether this penetrating advance and outward movement were to be effected in a few days, a week, a fortnight, or even longer. But this argument cannot be sustained. The whole effectiveness of the plan depended on the speed of its execution. If for instance an interval of two or three days intervened between the penetration and the outward wheel, the enemy's line would be switched back on both sides of the gap and a whole new web of fortifications would obstruct a further advance. All prospect of a great rupture followed by rolling up the flanks was dependent upon a rate of progress so rapid as to preclude the construction and organization by the enemy of fresh defensive lines.

If the Joffre-Haig plan was to achieve any success apart from mere attrition, progress must be continuous and rapid, and the objectives specified must be attained at the latest in two or three days. If this were not secured, the great attack would have failed. Other attacks might subsequently be planned and might be locally successful, but the scheme of a grand rupture was definitely at an end.

It is easy to prove that rapid progress was in fact contemplated and resolutely bid for. The use by Haig of his artillery clearly indicates the immediate ambitions which were in view. Instead of concentrating the fire on the first lines which were to be assaulted, the British artillery was dispersed in its action over the second and remoter lines and on many stronger points far in the rear, the hope clearly being that all these would be reached in the course of the first day or two days' fighting. The position of the British and French cavalry in close proximity to the battle front also reveals indisputably the hopes and expectations of the commanders.

Opening of the Battle.

At 7.30 in the morning of July 1 the British and French armies rose from their trenches steel-helmeted, gas-masked, equipped with all the latest apparatus of war, bombs, mortars, machine-guns light and heavy, and, supported by all their artillery, marched against the enemy on a front of 45 kilometres. Fourteen British divisions and five French divisions were almost immediately engaged.[1] South of the Somme on the French front the Germans were taken completely by surprise. They had not believed the French capable after their punishment at Verdun of any serious offensive effort. They expected at the most only demonstrations. They

[1] *Sir Douglas Haig's Command*, p. 93.
[2] *Ibid.*

[1] See map, p. 907.

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

GERMAN TRENCH AFTER THE ATTACK: JULY, 1916.

The effect produced by the British artillery is demonstrated by this picture of a German trench at Ovillers, looking towards the Bapaume road. The trench, as such, has ceased to exist. All that remains is a shapeless excavation, in the sides of which are seen entrances to the dug-outs which, more than anything else, helped to save the German line on that day.

were not ready for the French, and the French attack, though unfortunately on a needlessly small scale, captured and overwhelmed the German troops throughout the whole of their first system of trenches.

Very different were the fortunes of the British. Everywhere they found the enemy fully prepared. The seven-days' bombardment had by no means accomplished what had been expected. Safely hidden in the deep dug-outs, the defenders and their machine guns were practically intact. From these they emerged with deadly effect at the moment of assault or even after the waves of attack had actually passed over and beyond them.

Though the German front line was crossed at every point, the great advance into his position failed except on the right. The three British divisions on that flank captured Montauban and Mametz and an area 4½ miles wide by 1½ miles deep, thus isolating Fricourt on the south. The 21st Division north of this village also made progress and gained nearly a mile. But though the defenders of Fricourt were thus almost cut off, the attempt to storm the village failed.

Northwards again the two divisions of the IIIrd Corps, though they advanced a thousand yards, failed in spite of repeated efforts to capture La Boiselle or Ovillers on the long spurs of the Pozières plateau. By nightfall the gain in this part of the field comprised only two pockets or bulges in the enemy's position. The attack of the Xth Corps with three divisions broke down before the immense defences of the Thiepval spur and plateau. Although two of its great supporting points, the Leipzig and Schwaben redoubts, were captured, all attacks on Thiepval failed, and the failure to take Thiepval entailed the evacuation of the Schwaben. Opposite Beaumont-Hamel, on the extreme left, the VIIIth Corps, after reaching the German front line, was driven back to its own trenches. The subsidiary attack made by the Third Army against Gommecourt completely failed, practically no damage to the German defences having been done in the long bombardment.

* * * *

The 8th Division.

Let us descend from this general viewpoint into closer contact with a single division. The 8th Division, with all its three brigades in line, was to assault the Ovillers spur: the centre brigade up the ridge; the others through the valleys on each side. Both the valleys were enfiladed from the German positions at La Boiselle and in front of Thiepval. Against these three brigades stood the German 180th Infantry Regiment with two battalions holding the front defences, and the third battalion in reserve north of Pozières. After allowing for battalion reserves, there were ten companies comprising about 1,800 men to oppose the three brigades, together about 8,500 bayonets, of the 8th Division.

At 7.30 the British artillery barrage lifted. The trench mortars ceased fire, and the leading battalions of all three brigades rose and moved forward, each battalion extended on a frontage of 400 yards. A violent machine-gun and rifle fire opened immediately along the whole front of the German position, particularly from the machine-gun nests of La Boiselle and Ovillers; and almost simultaneously the German batteries behind Ovillers placed a barrage in No Man's Land and along the British front line and support trenches. Here let the German eyewitness speak.

Through German Eyes.

"The intense bombardment was realized by all to be a prelude to the infantry assault at last. The men in the dug-outs therefore waited ready, a belt full of hand grenades around them, gripping their rifles and listening for the bombardment to lift from the front defence zone on to the rear defences. It was of vital importance to lose not a second in taking up position in the open to meet the British infantry who would be advancing immediately behind the artillery barrage.

"Looking towards the British trenches through the long trench periscopes held up out of the dug-out entrances,

there could be seen a mass of steel helmets above their parapet showing that their storm-troops were ready for the assault. At 7.30 a.m. the hurricane of shells ceased as suddenly as it had begun. Our men at once clambered up the steep shafts leading from the dug-outs to daylight and ran singly or in groups to the nearest shell craters. The machine-guns were pulled out of the dug-outs and hurriedly placed into position, their crews dragging the heavy ammunition boxes up the steps and out to the guns. A rough firing line was thus rapidly established.

"As soon as in position, a series of extended lines of British infantry were seen moving forward from the British trenches. The first line appeared to continue without end to right and left. It was quickly followed by a second line, then a third and fourth. They came on at a steady easy pace as if expecting to find nothing alive in our front trenches. . . . The front line, preceded by a thin line of skirmishers and bombers, was now half-way across No Man's Land. 'Get ready!' was passed along our front from crater to crater, and heads appeared over the crater edges as final positions were taken up for the best view and machine guns mounted firmly in place. A few minutes later, when the leading British line was within 100 yards, the rattle of machine-gun and rifle fire broke out from along the whole line of craters. Some fired kneeling so as to get a better target over the broken ground, while others in the excitement of the moment, stood up regardless of their own safety to fire into the crowd of men in front of them.

"Red rockets sped up into the blue sky as a signal to the artillery, and immediately afterwards a mass of shells from the German batteries in rear tore through the air and burst among the advancing lines. Whole sections seemed to fall, and the rear formations, moving in closer order, quickly scattered. The advance rapidly crumpled under this hail of shells and bullets. All along the line men could be seen throwing their arms into the air and collapsing never to move again. Badly wounded rolled about in their agony, and others less severely injured crawled to the nearest shell-hole for shelter.

"The British soldier, however, has no lack of courage, and once his hand is set to the plough he is not easily turned from his purpose. The extended lines, though badly shaken and with many gaps, now came on all the faster. Instead of a leisurely walk they covered the ground in short rushes at the double. Within a few minutes the leading troops had reached within a stone's throw of our front trench, and while some of us continued to fire at point-blank range, others threw hand grenades among them. The British bombers answered back, while the infantry rushed forward with fixed bayonets. The noise of battle became indescribable. The shouting of orders and the shrill British cheers as they charged forward could be heard above the violent and intense fusillade of machine-guns and rifles and the bursting bombs, and above the deep thunderings of the artillery and the shell explosions. With all this were mingled the moans and groans of the wounded, the cries for help and the last screams of death. Again and again the extended lines of British infantry broke against the German defence like waves against a cliff, only to be beaten back. It was an amazing spectacle of unexampled gallantry, courage, and bull-dog determination on both sides."[1]

Tragedy.

At several points the British who had survived the awful fire storm broke into the German trenches. They were nowhere strong enough to maintain their position; and by nine o'clock the whole of the troops who were still alive and unwounded were either back in their own front-line trenches, or sheltering in the shell-holes of No Man's Land, or cut off and desperately defending themselves in the captured German trenches. A renewed attack was immediately ordered by Divisional Headquarters. But the Brigadiers reported they had no longer the force to attempt it. A fresh brigade was sent from the IIIrd Corps Headquarters. But before it could share the

[1] *Die Schwaben an der Ancre*, Gerster.

A HEAVY HOWITZER

By the year 1916 the grave disability due to weakness in the artillery arm under which the British
massed for the attack was not so great as later at Messines, where there was roughly one fiel
guns employed with the five corps of the Fourth Army, in addition to field pieces, include
and 15-inch, six. On the seven days of the bombardment plus the openin

From the drawing by F. Matania.

THE WESTERN FRONT.

had suffered was to a large extent removed. At the Somme battle, although the number of guns gun per ten yards of front as against one per twenty-one yards on the Somme, nevertheless the howitzers of the biggest calibre, such as 9·2 inch, of which there were sixty; 12-inch, eleven; day of the attack, there was a total expenditure of nearly two million shells.

fate of the others, all signs of fighting inside the German trenches by the British who had entered them had been extinguished; and the orders to renew the assault were cancelled. Here are some of the losses :

	Officers.	Other ranks.
2/Middlesex	22	592
2/Devons	16	418
2/West Yorks	16	490
2/Berkshire	20	414
2/Lincoln	20	434
1/Irish Rifles	17	411
8/K.O.Y.L.I.	25 (all)	522
8/York and Lancaster ...	23	613
9/York and Lancaster ...	23	517
11/Sherwood Foresters ...	20	488

The Greatest British Loss in History.

In all, the Division lost in little more than two hours 218 out of 300 officers and 5,274 other ranks out of 8,500 who had gone into action. By the evening of July 1, the German 180th Infantry Regiment was again in possession of the whole of its trenches. Its losses during the day's fighting had been 8 officers and 273 soldiers killed, wounded and missing. Only two of its three battalions had been engaged. It had not been necessary to call the reserve battalion to their aid.

* * * *

Night closed over the still thundering battlefield. Nearly 60,000 British soldiers had fallen, killed or wounded, or were prisoners in the hands of the enemy. This was the greatest loss and slaughter sustained in a single day in the whole history of the British Army. Of the infantry who advanced to the attack, nearly half had been overtaken by death, wounds or capture. Against this, apart from territory, we had gained 4,000 prisoners and a score of cannon. It needs some hardihood for Colonel Boraston to write :[1]

"The events of July 1 . . . bore out the conclusions of the British higher command and amply justified the tactical methods employed."

[1] *Sir Douglas Haig's Command*, p. 103.

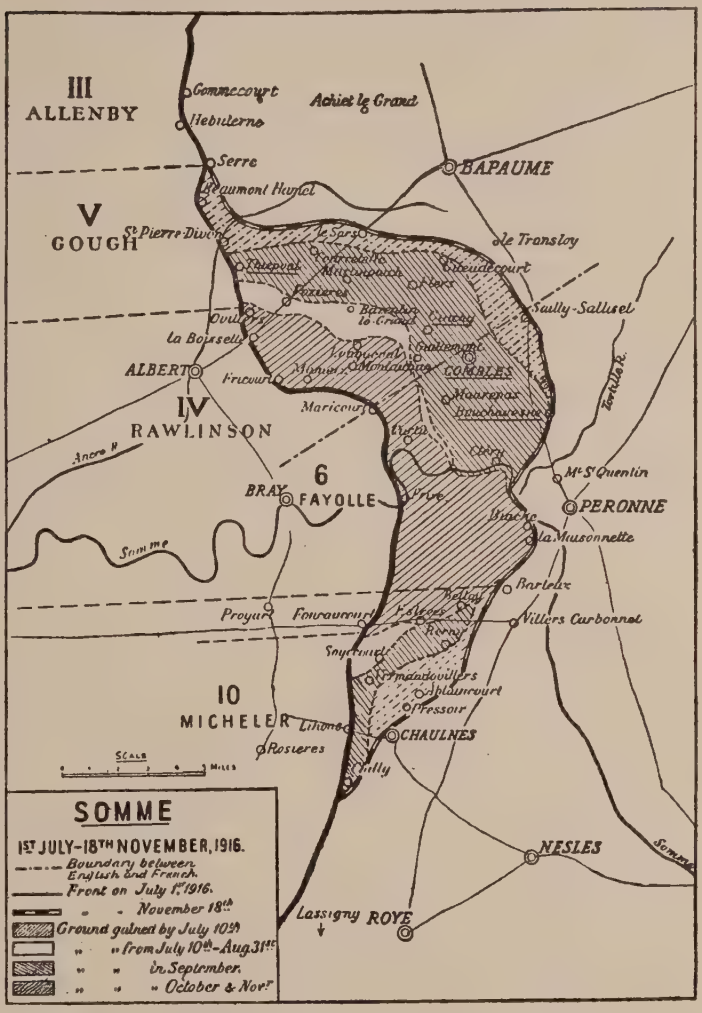
Photo : Topical Press.

GERMAN PRISONERS NEAR THIEPVAL.

This photograph, taken on July 1, 1916, shows captured Germans being brought in after the attack of the 32nd Division on the Thiepval spur. This division was comprised of New Army troops mainly recruited from the north of England, but with three Scots battalions. The advance of the 32nd Division at Thiepval was held up on the opening day of the battle, and the village remained in German hands. As the long drawn out Somme battle proceeded Thiepval was one of the villages to be completely obliterated by shell fire.

The Battle sinks to a Minor Scale.

The extent of the catastrophe was concealed by the Censorship, and its significance masked by a continuance of the fighting on a far smaller scale, four divisions alone being employed. The shattered divisions on the left were placed under General Gough, whose command, originally designated the "Reserve Corps" and intended to receive resting divisions, was renamed the "Reserve Army" and given orders to maintain "a slow and methodical pressure" on the enemy's front. Henceforward the battle degenerated into minor operations which proceeded continuously on a comparatively small front. The losses were however in this phase more evenly balanced, as the Germans delivered many vigorous counter-attacks.



THE SOMME AREA: JULY 1–NOVEMBER 18, 1916.

Sketch map showing the Army sectors on the Somme and the ground gained during the four and a half months of the struggle.

"To sum up the results of the fighting of these five days" (says Haig with severe accuracy) [1] "on a front of over six miles . . . our troops had swept over the whole of the enemy's first and strongest system of defence. . . . They had driven him back over a distance of more than a mile, and had carried four elaborately fortified villages."

These gains had however been purchased by the loss of nearly a hundred thousand of our best troops. The battle continued. The objectives were now pulverized villages and blasted woods, and the ground conquered was at each

[1] *Sir Douglas Haig's Despatches*, p. 27.

stage so limited both in width and depth as to exclude any strategic results. On July 14 a dawn attack towards Bazentin-le-Grand led to a local success, and the world was eagerly informed that a squadron of the 7th Dragoon Guards had actually ridden on their horses as far as High Wood, whence they were withdrawn the next day.

"The enemy's second main system of defence" (writes Sir Douglas)[1] "had been captured on a front of over three miles. We had forced him back more than a mile. . . . Four more of his fortified villages and three woods had been wrested from him by determined fighting, and our advanced troops had penetrated as far as his third line of defence."

Its Obstinate Prolongation.

Unfortunately the enemy "had dug and wired many new trenches, both in front and behind his original front lines. He had also brought up fresh troops, and there was no possibility of taking him by surprise. The task before us was therefore a very difficult one. . . . At this juncture its difficulties were increased by unfavourable weather."[2]

As the divisions which had been specially prepared for the battle were successively shot to pieces and used up, their remnants were sent to hold the trenches in the quiet portions of the front, thus setting free other divisions, not previously engaged, for their turn in the furnace. It was not until July 20 that the battle again expanded to the proportions of a great operation. On this day and the two days following a general attack was organized by seventeen British and French divisions on the front Pozières-Foucaucourt. The losses were again very heavy, particularly to the British. Only a few hundred yards were gained upon the average along the front.

The conflict sank once more to the bloody but local struggles of two or three divisions repeatedly renewed as fast as they were consumed, and consumed as fast as they were renewed. By the end of July an advance of about two and a half miles had been made on a front which at this depth did not exceed two miles. For these gains 171,000[1] British soldiers had fallen—killed or wounded. 11,400 German prisoners had been captured, but more than double that number of British prisoners and wounded had fallen into the hands of the enemy, of whom many had under the terrible conditions of the battle perished between the fighting lines beyond the aid of friend or foe.

The Anatomy of the Battlefield.

The anatomy of the battles of Verdun and the Somme was the same. A battlefield had been selected. Around this battlefield walls were built—double, triple, quadruple—of enormous cannon. Behind these railways were constructed to feed them, and mountains of shells were built up. All this was the work of months. Thus the battlefield was completely encircled by thousands of guns of all sizes, and a wide oval space prepared in their midst. Through this awful arena all the divisions of each army, battered ceaselessly by the enveloping artillery, were made to pass in succession, as if they were the teeth of interlocking cogwheels grinding each other.

For month after month the ceaseless cannonade continued at its utmost intensity, and month after month the gallant divisions of heroic human beings were torn to pieces in this terrible rotation. Then came the winter, pouring down rain from the sky to clog the feet of men, and drawing veils of mist before the hawk-eyes of their artillery. The arena, as used to happen in the Coliseum in those miniature Roman days, was flooded with water. A vast sea of ensanguined mud, churned by thousands of vehicles, by hundreds of thousands of men and millions of shells, replaced the blasted dust. Still the struggle continued. Still the remorseless wheels revolved. Still the auditorium of artillery roared. At last the legs of men could no longer move; they wallowed and floundered helplessly in the slime. Their food, their ammunition lagged behind

[1] *Ibid.*, pp. 30-1.
[2] *Ibid.*, p. 33.

[1] i.e. 196,000 minus 25,000 for the quiet sectors. *Military Effort*, Monthly Returns, p. 253 *et seq.*

them along the smashed and choked roadways.

Conditions become More Equal.

As the battle progressed the conditions of offence and defence became more equal. Trenches were obliterated and barbed wire pulverized. The combats tended increasingly to become field actions in a wilderness of shell holes. The enemy's losses grew as the weeks wore on. The battle flared up again into a great operation on September 25 and the following days; and November 13 saw large scale attacks along the Ancre tributary and the brilliant storm of Beaumont-Hamel.

Although the Germans used and risked at almost every stage much smaller numbers of men than the attacking British, the experiences of defence for these smaller numbers were probably even more terrible than for the attack, and the moral effect upon the German Army of seeing position after position, trench after trench captured and its defenders slaughtered or made prisoners was undoubtedly deeply depressing. While the British, in spite of their far greater losses, felt themselves to be constantly advancing, and were cheered by captures of trophies and prisoners, the steadfast German soldiery could not escape the impression that they were being devoured piecemeal by the stronger foe. The effect was lasting. German shock troops and assault divisions were in later campaigns to show the highest qualities, and achieve wonderful feats of arms. But never again did the mass of German rank and file fight as they fought on the Somme.

The German 27th Division which defended Guillemont was one of the best divisions here engaged.

Its history says:

"Incontestably a culminating point was reached (at the Somme) that was never again approached. What we experienced surpassed all previous conception. The enemy's fire never ceased for an hour. It fell day and night on the front line and tore fearful gaps in the ranks of the defenders; it fell on the approaches to the front line and made all movement towards the front hell; it fell on the rearward trenches and the battery positions and smashed up men and material in a manner never seen before or since; it repeatedly reached even the resting battalions far behind the front and there occasioned exceptionally painful losses, and our artillery was powerless against it."

And again:

"*In the Somme fighting of* 1916 *there was a spirit of heroism which was never again found in the division,* however conspicuous it (the division) remained until the end of the war" . . . "*the men in* 1918 *had not the temper, the hard bitterness and spirit of sacrifice of their predecessors.*" [1]

The Strain on the Enemy.

As the attackers became more experienced, the system of deep dugouts turned against the Germans. "The Entente troops," wrote Ludendorff,[2] "worked their way further and further into the German lines. We had heavy losses in men and material. At that time the front lines were still strongly held. The men took refuge in dugouts and cellars from the enemy's artillery fire. The enemy came up behind their barrage, got into the trenches and villages before our men could crawl out from their shelter. A continuous yield of prisoners to the enemy was the result. The strain on physical and moral strength was tremendous and divisions could only be kept in the line for a few days at a time. . . . The number of available divisions was shrinking . . . units were hopelessly mixed up, the supply of ammunition was getting steadily shorter. . . . The situation on the Western front gave cause for greater anxiety than I had anticipated. But at that time I did not realize its full significance. It was just as well, otherwise I could never have had the courage to take the important decision to transfer still more divisions from the heavily engaged Western front to the Eastern in order to recover the initiative there and deal Roumania a decisive blow."

[1] *Die 27 Infanterie Division im Weltkrige.*
[2] *My War Memories,* p. 244.

Photo: Newspaper Illustrations.

THE ATTACK AT MAMETZ.

Photography in modern war is a difficult and dangerous art. This picture, taken on the actual battlefield on July 1, 1916, shows the British infantry advancing near Mametz. The figures are very small, but stand out clearly against the white chalk of the trenches. The white blur in the foreground was caused by a shell-burst not many feet from the camera.

The Exposure of the Tanks.

The increasing sense of dominating the enemy and the resolute desire for a decision at all costs led in September to a most improvident disclosure of the caterpillar vehicles. The first of these had early in January been manœuvred in Hatfield Park in the presence of the King, Lord Kitchener and several high authorities. Lord Kitchener was sceptical; but Mr. Lloyd George was keen, and the British Headquarters mildly interested. Fifty of these engines, developed with great secrecy under the purposely misleading name of "Tanks," had been completed. They arrived in France during the early stages of the Battle of the Somme for experimental purposes and the training of their crews. When it was seen how easily they crossed trenches and flattened out entanglements made for trial behind the British line, the force of the conception appealed to the directing minds of the Army. The Headquarters Staff, hitherto so lukewarm, now wished to use them at once in the battle.

Mr. Lloyd George thought this employment of the new weapon in such small numbers premature. He informed me of the discussion which was proceeding. I was so shocked at the proposal to expose this tremendous secret to the enemy upon such a petty scale and as a mere makeweight to what I was sure could only be an indecisive operation, that I sought an interview with Mr. Asquith, of whom I was then a very definite opponent. The Prime Minister received me in the most friendly manner, and listened so patiently to my appeal that I thought I had succeeded in convincing him. But if this were so, he did not make his will effective; and on September 15 the first Tanks, or "large armoured cars" as they were called in the communiqué, went into action on the front of the Fourth Army attacking between the Combles ravine and Martinpuich.

Their Effect.

In a memorandum drawn up by General Swinton several months before, when he was organizing the Tanks Corps, it had been urged that the tanks

should lead the attack, combined in as large numbers as possible, with large forces of infantry launched at once behind them. This advice was not accepted. The tanks—what there were—were dispersed in twos and threes against specified strong points or singly for special purposes. They were used as the merest makeweight. Of 59 tanks in France 49 reached the battlefield, and of these 35 reached their starting points, of which 31 crossed the German trenches.

Although suffering from all the diseases of infancy, and with their crews largely untrained, it was immediately proved that a new factor had been introduced into the war. One single tank on this first occasion, finding the attacking infantry held up in front of Flers by wire and machine guns, climbed over the German trench, and travelling along behind it, immediately and without loss forced its occupants, 300 strong, to surrender. Only nine tanks surmounted all the difficulties and pushed on ahead of the infantry. Whenever a tank reached its objective, the sight of it was enough, and the astounded Germans forthwith fled or yielded. Ten days later, on September 25, another tank, a female, followed by two companies of infantry, cleared 1,500 yards of the Gird Trench, and took 8 German officers and 362 men prisoners, apart from numerous killed and wounded, with a total loss to the British of only five men. Let these episodes be contrasted with the massacre of the 8th Division already described.

Meanwhile, to achieve this miniature success, and to carry the education of the professional mind one stage further forward, a secret of war which well used would have procured a world-shaking victory in 1917 had been recklessly revealed to the enemy. Providentially however the scales of convention darkened also the vision of the German General Staff and clouded even the keen eye of Ludendorff. In the same way the Germans had exposed their secret plans of poison gas by its use on a small scale at Ypres in 1915, when they had no reserves ready to exploit the initial

Photo : Imperial War Museum.

WOUNDED ON THE SOMME.

The Field Ambulance shown here was situated near Albert, and the rows of stretcher cases by the roadside are awaiting transportation to the Base Hospitals. The photograph was taken on September 12, 1916.

Photo: Central News.

AFTER THE BOMBARDMENT OF MAMETZ.

This photograph, together with others on this and the following page, are of the remains of Somme villages or of the ground upon which once they stood. Here is the village of Mametz as it appeared after the infantry assault. Mametz was captured by the 7th Division on July 1, 1916, and was retaken by the Germans in the March offensive of 1918, being again occupied by the British in the autumn of that year.

Photo: L.N.A.

THIS WAS A MAIN ROAD.

The main road the Germans used when bringing up their ammunition to Mametz. There is little left of surface to indicate that at one time a well-made track existed. British artillery fire has churned up the ground until nothing remains save rubble.

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

HERE STOOD BEAUMONT-HAMEL.

Around the village of Beaumont-Hamel some of the fiercest fighting on the Somme took place. For long the Germans resisted successfully every attempt to take the village, but it was eventually stormed in November. The Royal Naval Division, which we last heard of in connection with the Gallipoli campaign, greatly distinguished itself at Beaumont-Hamel, and near here Lt.-Col. B. C. Freyberg, of that division, won the V.C. in recognition of magnificent leadership.

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

THE WRECKED VILLAGE OF MARTINPUICH.

Martinpuich is some six miles south-west of Bapaume, and during the Somme battle was taken by the 15th (Scottish) Division. Here, as elsewhere on the Somme, nothing was left but ruin and desolation. Martinpuich was recovered by the Germans in March, 1918, and fell once more into British hands on August 24, 1918.

success. But their enemy did not in that instance neglect the knowledge they were given.

* * * *

I turn aside from the narrative to examine a once keen controversy in which I engaged myself.

During the whole month of July the public and the Cabinet were continually assured that the losses of the Germans in the Somme battle far exceeded our own. It is certainly necessary not to discourage by the publication of shocking figures an army or a nation during the progress of a great battle; but a Government is entitled to know the facts from its servants. I held no official position at this time; but applying my knowledge and judgment to all the information I could acquire, I formed my own opinion upon the reports with which I was told the Cabinet were being furnished. I said of course no word in public, but viewing with the utmost pain the terrible and disproportionate slaughter of our troops and the delusions that were rife, I felt it my duty to place on record my appreciation of the facts. I showed this appreciation when written to Sir Frederick Smith,[1] a member of the Cabinet and Attorney-General, with whom I had been for many years on terms of the closest friendship. He thought it right to have it printed and circulated officially to his colleagues. I reprint it here with his covering note:

"In the course of conversation with myself, Winston Churchill asserted his views with regard to the offensive now taking place in the West. I am by no means wholly in agreement with his standpoint, thinking, as I do, that he underrates the importance of our offensive as a contribution to the general strategical situation. I suggested, however, that he should embody his views in a memorandum.

"He has done so. After careful consideration, I formed the view that the result would interest my colleagues and enable them to apply their minds to the

[1] The late Lord Birkenhead.

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

TANKS TAKING IN PETROL: SOMME, 1916.

The tanks first went into action on September 15, at Flers, on the Somme. This imprudent disclosure of a new idea in war before it had evolved sufficiently to reach overwhelming power either in the number of machines available or in mechanical efficiency, was one of the most unfortunate mistakes of the war years. By September, 1916, the army on the Somme had fared so badly, and the casualties inflicted upon the infantry by the German machine gunners had become so alarming, that the few tanks available were thrown into the battle in the hope that by their aid losses might be diminished. The moral effect produced upon the Germans by this latest apparition was great, but there were too few tanks to gain results on a scale such as those obtained in the following year at Cambrai.

situation which develops from day to day with both the official and a critical view before them.

"I therefore circulate the memorandum. F. S."

My Memorandum of August 1, 1916.

MEMORANDUM.

1. The British attack on the 1st and 2nd July was upon a front of say, 20,000 to *25,000* yards. [The facts as now known: 27,000 yards.] On nearly three-fifths of this distance it was repulsed. On rather more than two-fifths it advanced our lines about 2 miles. *Fourteen* [fifteen] British divisions were engaged, exposing (at about 10,000 bayonets each) 140,000 infantry to the full severity of battle.

On the front attacked the Germans had *eight* [seven] divisions, of which *five* [four] were in the line and *three* [three] in reserve. Of the 50,000 bayonets comprised in the five divisions in the line, 20,000 were probably in the first system of trenches, 20,000 more in support, and 10,000 in divisional reserve. The 20,000 in the first system of trenches would be the chief sufferers from the bombardment, because they cannot move away from the positions bombarded, and we may assume 50 per cent. loss to them along the whole front *plus* prisoners taken on the section successfully assaulted—10,000+4,000. The supporting troops can be moved about to avoid the shelled localities, and 25 per cent. loss among them to cover bombardment casualties and losses incurred in reinforcement or counter-attack is a liberal estimate—5,000. Ten per cent. is sufficient for the divisional reserves—1,000 Total German loss in the first phase—20,000, of which 4,000 prisoners and 8,000 killed, died of wounds, or disabled for the war (i.e. half the remainder) represent permanent loss—12,000.

What were the British losses? They

Photo: Photopress.

TANK FIRED BY A GERMAN FLAME THROWER.

No sooner did tanks appear than the Germans developed such counter measures as were possible. Among these were attempts to set them alight by means of flame throwers, or to penetrate their armour by shells fired from special anti-tank guns. None of these defensive weapons prevailed against the tank when, in 1917 and 1918, it was nearing perfection. It was, of course, still vulnerable, but as the months passed the tank became more and more something to be feared.

were certainly down to midnight on the 2nd July not less than 60,000, and of these more than 20,000 were missing, i.e. killed, wounded, or prisoners in the enemy's hands. The Cabinet should require precise figures. On the above basis, however, the permanent loss might be calculated roughly as follows:

Missing	20,000
Dead or died of wounds in our own hands at 25 per cent of the remainder ...	10,000
Disabled for the war about ditto	10,000
Total British permanent loss	40,000
Total German permanent loss	12,000

It is believed that both these totals are more favourable to us than the actual facts.

The Question of Relative Losses—Accuracy of its Figures.

2. Since the first attack the fighting has narrowed to a front of about 7,000 yards, and has become less one-sided owing to German counter-attacks. Our total loss to the end of July is probably *150,000* [171,000]. This is equivalent to half the effective bayonets of thirty divisions. How many divisions have been engaged? How many have been deprived through losses of an offensive value within the next three months? How many fresh divisions are there left? These are serious considerations.

What of the enemy? Out of roughly *120* [120½] divisions west of the Rhine about thirty-five were, before the battle, opposite the British and the rest opposite the French and Belgians. The two main concentrations were on the British front and against Verdun. How many additional divisions have been concentrated against the British during the progress of this battle, and where have they come from?

We know that the whole front against us is firmly held. It has been tested at many points, and the enemy has himself shown enterprise and activity at many others. In particular the Australian attack south of Armentières met with most formidable resistance, and our troops were expelled from the German trenches with a loss said to be nearly 3,000. The line opposite the French has also been tested at many points in its 400-mile length, and the front is found everywhere to be effectively maintained by the enemy. The Germans usually hold their lines with the minimum numbers consistent with safety, and it is not likely they can have removed any appreciable force from any part of the ordinary front. There remain only out of the troops west of the Rhine their general reserves, and the concentration in front of Verdun, who could be drawn on.

How many divisions have been moved opposite the British from these two sources? Statements that the Germans have brought up thirty divisions opposite to the British should be distrusted. Where can they have come from? The fact that units of thirty divisions have been identified by contact, if true, is no proof. *It may well be that individual regiments or battalions which were resting have been scraped from different parts of the line to meet the local emergency; but it is not seen how more than the equivalent six or seven additional divisions can have been brought to the sector under the British attack. If this be so, the total German force successively or simultaneously engaged in the battle with us cannot exceed fourteen or fifteen divisions.* ["The Germans scraped from the Somme to Rheims all the 3rd battalions which constituted the local reserves of sectors: they obtained thus about 13 battalions belonging to 8 different Army Corps." Lieut.-Col. Corda: La Guerre Mondiale, p. 174.

German Divisions Engaged:

July 1 ...	... 7
July 1-9	... 2 more
July 10-21	... 5 more
July 21-31	... 2 more
Total	... 16]

It is probably less. The diaries of German officers published show how numbers and reserves are stinted, and how much is expected of every unit engaged. The impression which these

diaries produce is of lavish use of superior numbers on the British side and rather callous sacrifice of very inferior forces on the German; in other words, they are maintaining their defence "on the cheap," and by minor expedients of reinforcement.

3. Assuming however that as many as the equivalent of fifteen German divisions have at one time or another been engaged in this battle against, say, thirty British divisions, how has the proportion of loss fallen on the two armies after the first shock?

Actual British and German Losses.

If out of thirty British divisions put through the mill we have lost in the second phase 90,000, the Germans *at the same rate* would have lost on fifteen divisions engaged about 45,000. This would make the totals to date:

British ...	...	150,000
Germans	...	65,000 [1]

[1] These figures give a proportion of British to German losses of 2·3 to 1. Sir Douglas Haig, in his final despatch upon the Somme, committed himself to the following positive assertion: "There is nevertheless sufficient evidence to place it beyond doubt that the enemy's losses in men and material have been very considerably higher than those of the Allies." [2]

Colonel Boraston has now admitted the miscalculation which was made. "Such figures as are now available," he writes, "do not bear out this view so far as the British front is concerned. The total British casualties on the Western front between July 1 and November 19, 1916, were some 463,000. A calculation based on German returns made available since the Armistice, state the German casualties incurred opposite the British during this period as about 218,000." [3] Making an allowance which is certainly reasonable, for casualties on both sides on the quiet sectors, Colonel Boraston states the actual British casualties in the Battle of the Somme at about 410,000 and the German casualties against them at 180,000. This yields the proportion of 2·27 British casualties to 1 German, or almost exactly the estimate of my memorandum.

The Headquarters Staff estimates dated August 1, placed the German loss in July at "certainly not less than 130,000 men," as against my estimate of 65,000 at the same date. The *Reichsarchiv's* returns give the figure for July on the whole British front of *59,493*. The British Monthly Returns show a British total of *196,000* for July. Deducting one-eighth from both for casualties on the quiet sectors, we reach the figures of German loss in July *52,000*, and British *171,000*.

[2] *Sir Douglas Haig's Despatches*, p. 52.

[3] *Sir Douglas Haig's Command*, 1915-18, p. 149.

This is probably more favourable to us than the truth.

Criticism of Results.

4. Leaving *personnel* and coming to ground gained, we have not conquered in a month's fighting as much ground as we were expected to gain in the first two hours. We have not advanced 3 miles in the direct line at any point. We have only penetrated to that depth on a front of 8,000 or 10,000 yards. Penetration upon so narrow a front is quite useless for the purpose of breaking the line. It would be fatal to advance through a gap of this small size, which could be swept by a cross-fire of artillery. We are therefore now trying to broaden the gap by attacking sideways to the north. This is a very slow business. In four weeks we have progressed less than a mile. Unless a gap of at least 20 miles can be opened, no large force could be put through. Even then it would have to fight a "manœuvre battle" for which neither its training nor the experience of its staffs has prepared it, under very adverse conditions.

But the month that has passed has enabled the enemy to make whatever preparations behind his original lines he may think necessary. He is already defending a 500-mile front in France alone, and the construction of extra lines about 10 miles long to loop in the small sector now under attack is no appreciable strain on his labour or trench stores. He could quite easily by now have converted the whole countryside in front of our attack into successive lines of defence and fortified posts. What should we have done in the same time in similar circumstances? Anything he has left undone in this respect is due only to his confidence. A very powerful hostile artillery has now been assembled against us, and this will greatly aggravate the difficulties of further advance.

Nor are we making for any point of strategic or political consequence. Verdun at least would be a trophy—to which sentiment on both sides has become mistakenly attached. But what are Péronne and Bapaume, even if we were likely to take them? The open country towards which we are struggling by

inches is capable of entrenched defence at every step, and is utterly devoid of military significance. There is no question of breaking the line, of "letting loose the cavalry in the open country behind," or of inducing a general withdrawal of the German armies in the West. No *local* strategic advantages of any kind have been reaped or can be expected.

The tactical form of attack seems open to comment. Surprise—which played a vital part in the Russian victories and in the French attack—was wholly lacking. Nor was there that *overwhelming* concentration of artillery on particular points which characterized the German operations against Verdun. The sector selected for assault was one where the chalky ground enabled very deep entrenchments and dug-outs to be made, and was therefore far less adapted to the first employment of our new and very powerful artillery than some other portions of the front.

In *personnel* the results of the operation have been disastrous; in *terrain* they have been absolutely barren. And, although our brave troops on a portion of the front, mocking their losses and ready to make any sacrifice, are at the moment elated by the small advances made and the capture of prisoners and *souvenirs*, the ultimate moral effect will be disappointing. From every point of view, therefore, the British offensive *per se* has been a great failure. With twenty times the shell, and five times the guns, and more than double the losses, the gains have but little exceeded those of Loos. And how was Loos viewed in retrospect?

6. It remains to consider the effects of this tremendous and most valiant effort on the general situation in the West and other theatres.

It is too early to say whether the British offensive has forced the enemy to suspend during its continuance his costly attacks on Verdun. As soon as our offensive is definitely mastered it will be open to him either to renew them or to use his successful defence against us as a cloak or an excuse for getting out of the job. No doubt the French are pleased. Having suffered so much themselves in blood, they think it is only fair we should suffer too. Their own attack on our right was a fairly profitable operation. This is the solitary advantage in the West. Nor can it be claimed that our offensive was necessary to the Russian successes in the East. Their greatest success was gained largely by surprise before we had begun. We could have held the Germans on our front just as well by threatening an offensive as by making one. By cutting the enemy's wire, by bombardments, raiding and general activity at many unexpected points begun earlier and kept up later, we could have made it impossible for him to withdraw any appreciable force.

[No important advances or captures were made by the Russians after the opening of the Somme Battle.]

If the French were pressed at Verdun we could have taken over more line and thus liberated reinforcements.

7. So long as an army possesses a strong offensive power, it rivets its adversary's attention. But when the kick is out of it, when the long-saved-up effort is expended, the enemy's anxiety is relieved, and he recovers his freedom of movement. This is the danger into which we are now drifting. We are using up division after division—not only those originally concentrated for the attack, but many taken from all parts of the line. After being put through the mill and losing perhaps half their infantry and two-thirds of their infantry officers, these shattered divisions will take several months to recover, especially as they will in many cases have to go into the trenches at once.

Thus the pent-up energies of the army are being dissipated, and if the process is allowed to go on, the enemy will not be under the need of keeping so many troops on our front as heretofore. He will then be able to restore or sustain the situation against Russia.

W. S. C.

August 1, 1916.

The statements in this memorandum were resented and repudiated both in the Cabinet and at General Headquarters, to which a copy soon found its way. There is no doubt that I did not make sufficient allowance for the compulsion to an

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

GERMAN FIELD GUN: WESTERN FRONT.

By far the greatest number of casualties inflicted upon the British infantry at the Somme and elsewhere on the Western Front were caused by German field guns and machine guns. The German artilleryman was an excellent gunner and handled the light field guns with intelligence and accuracy.

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

A GERMAN MACHINE GUN NEST.

If the German field artillery was good, the machine gunners were superb. The guns were served by men of a fine type and in almost every case, when hard pressed, they fought their guns to the end.

THE GREAT MINE (

Mines were driven at several points along the Somme sector prior to July 1, 1916. One of th
mine, it contained 60,000 lbs. of ammonal in two charges laid sixty feet apart and fifty-two fee
the German garrison at that point, leaving a crater ninet

offensive exercised by the blind movement of events. The facts were however only too true.

I have thought it right to thrash this controversy out in detail, to vindicate the claim which I make that I pass no important criticisms on the conduct of commanders in the light of after knowledge unless there exists documentary proof that substantially the same criticisms were put on record before or during the event, and while every point was disputed and unknowable.

Soothing Information.

Sir Douglas Haig was not at this time well served by his advisers in the Intelligence Department of General Headquarters. The temptation to tell a Chief in a great position the things he most likes to hear is one of the commonest explanations of mistaken policy. An Emperor, a Commander-in-Chief, even a Prime Minister in peace or war, is in the main surrounded by smiling and respectful faces. Most people who come in contact with him in times of strain feel honoured by contact with so much power or in sympathy with the bearer of such heavy burdens. They are often prompted to use smooth processes, to mention some favourable item, to leave unsaid some ugly misgiving or some awkward contradiction. Thus the outlook of the leader on whose decision fateful events depend is usually far more sanguine than the brutal facts admit.

In political life there are many correctives : there is no walk so crowded with candid friends as Parliament. Apart from this, there is in time of peace organized opposition which with tireless industry assembles all the worst possible facts, draws from them the most alarming conclusions, and imputes the most unworthy motives. But the head of a great army in time of war has no such balancing apparatus. His power over his subordinates is practically absolute. Their loyalty, their sense of discipline, lead them to try to win his favour, or at least to spare his feelings, on every occa-

Photo : Imperial War Museum

R AT LA BOISELLE.

argest was that prepared beneath the German front line at La Boiselle. Known as the Lochnagar below the surface. The mine was successfully exploded at 7.28 a.m. on July 1, and destroyed yards across, seventy feet deep, and with lips fifteen feet high.

sion. A sign of displeasure on his part at some objectionable piece of news might easily be interpreted by a subordinate as a wish to be freed from such inflictions. The whole habit of mind of a military staff is based upon subordination of opinion. It is not every councillor who, like the Bastard in "King John," will say to his sovereign :

> "But if you be afeared to hear the worst,
> Then let the worst unheard fall on your head."

Inexorable Forces.

Yet when events are surveyed in retrospect, it does not seem just to throw the reproach of this battle upon Sir Douglas Haig. The esoteric Buddhists believe that at the end of each life a new being is created, heir to the faults or the virtues of his forerunner. The tragedies of 1916 had been decreed by the events of 1915. The failure of the Allied Governments in that year to effect the destruction of Turkey and the union of the Balkans against the Central Powers left open no favourable means of action. The French agony at Verdun compelled a British relieving counter-attack in France, before the new British armies, and particularly their vastly expanded artillery, were sufficiently trained to save the assaulting troops the heaviest loss. The Tanks, though already conceived, had yet to be born and reared. Resources did not exist sufficient to mount simultaneously several offensives along the battle front, thus leaving the enemy uncertain to the last moment of the true point of attack. Indispensable preparation destroyed equally indispensable surprise. Yet the call to attack was peremptory. Delay was impossible.

Sir Douglas Haig, like all the Commanders on the Western Front, would no doubt, had he been responsible, have opposed the great turning movement in the south-east of Europe which was possible in 1915 and the consequences of which alone could have yielded decisive results in 1916. He was also confident

and convinced of breaking the German front upon the Somme. But had he been as reluctant as he was ardent to attack the German positions, he could not have remained idle. Inexorable forces carried rulers and ruled along together as the wheels of Fate revolved.

Nevertheless the campaign of 1916 on the Western Front was from beginning to end a welter of slaughter, which after the issue was determined left the British and French armies weaker in relation to the Germans than when it opened, while the actual battle fronts were not appreciably altered, and except for the relief of Verdun, which relieved the Germans no less than the French, no strategic advantage of any kind had been gained. The German unwisdom in attacking Verdun was more than cancelled in French casualties, and almost cancelled in the general strategic sphere by the heroic prodigality of the French defence. The loss in prestige which the Germans sustained through their failure to take Verdun was to be more than counterbalanced by their success in another theatre while all the time they kept their battle front unbroken on the Somme.

Glory of the Troops.

But this sombre verdict, which it seems probable posterity will endorse in still more searching terms, in no way diminishes the true glory of the British Army. A young army, but the finest we have ever marshalled; improvised at the sound of the cannnade, every man a volunteer, inspired not only by love of country but by a widespread conviction that human freedom was challenged by military and Imperial tyranny, they grudged no sacrifice however unfruitful and shrank from no ordeal however destructive.

Struggling forward through the mire and filth of the trenches, across the corpse-strewn crater fields, amid the flaring, crashing, blasting barrages and murderous machine-gun fire, conscious of their race, proud of their cause, they seized the most formidable soldiery in Europe by the throat, slew them and hurled them unceasingly backward. If two lives or ten lives were required by their commanders to kill one German, no word of complaint ever rose from the fighting troops. No attack, however forlorn, however fatal, found them without ardour. No slaughter, however desolating, prevented them from returning to the charge. No physical conditions however severe deprived their commanders of their obedience and loyalty. Martyrs not less than soldiers, they fulfilled the high purpose of duty with which they were imbued.

The battlefields of the Somme were the graveyards of Kitchener's Army. The flower of that generous manhood which quitted peaceful civilian life in every kind of workaday occupation, which came at the call of Britain, and as we may still hope, at the call of humanity, and came from the most remote parts of her Empire, was shorn away for ever in 1916. Unconquerable except by death, which they had conquered, they have set up a monument of native virtue which will command the wonder, the reverence and the gratitude of our island people as long as we endure as a nation among men.

CHAPTER LXI

THE ROUMANIAN DISASTER

Roumania Declares War—Fall of Falkenhayn—Hindenburg and Ludendorff—The Usurpation of the German General Staff—The Roumanian Opportunity Gone—Rash Precautions—The Salonica Factor—Sarrail's Offensive—Jeopardy of Roumania—Disposition of Her Armies—Russian Misgivings—Turturkai—The Closing Jaws—The Common Woe—The Autumn at Verdun—Nivelle and Mangin—Douaumont, October 24.

WE have seen how easily at the beginning of 1916 Roumania in her isolated position could have been induced or compelled to join the Teutonic Powers. We have seen how Falkenhayn, by turning to the west towards France and allowing Austria to do the same towards Italy, had relieved Roumania from adverse pressure and enabled her to preserve for another six months her attitude of ambiguous watchfulness. Events of a decided character were now to take place.

Roumania Declares War.

At the end of August the second of the two great catastrophes which Falkenhayn's unwisdom had prepared fell upon the Central Empires. Roumania declared war. Although this danger had been approaching since Brusilov's victory at the beginning of June, and important precautionary measures taken to guard against it, the actual declaration came much sooner than the German Government had expected, and fell as a shock upon German public opinion.

A spontaneous movement of anger and disgust swept across the German Empire. The position of Germany was indeed more critical at this juncture than at any other period of the war until the final collapse. The Battle of Verdun was still making enormous inroads upon German resources, and a most serious moral defeat impending there. The Battle of the Somme was in full blast. The British, undeterred by their losses, continued to throw fresh divisions into the struggle, and to launch their formidable attacks at brief intervals. The strain upon the Germans in the west was intense. The sense of failure at Verdun, and of being slowly overpowered and worn down by superior forces on the Somme, had affected the morale of their troops. Physical exhaustion and battle losses had reduced the German reserves to the slenderest proportions, and many more weeks of crisis and uncertainty lay between the hard-pressed front and the shield of winter.

Meanwhile the failure of Austria was glaring. The whole southern front in the east was still in a state of flux. The Russian tide rolled forward; no limits could yet be assigned to its advance. Scores of thousands of Czech troops had eagerly surrendered to the enemy, and were being enrolled bodily as a separate army corps in the Russian ranks. The Italian counter-offensive on the Isonzo was developing. The whole resisting power of the Austro-Hungarian Empire quivered on the verge of collapse. At this moment a fresh, brave and well-trained army of 500,000 Roumanians was thrown into the adverse scale, and entered the conflict in that very theatre where the Teutonic Powers were weakest and most vulnerable. The vital granaries and oil-fields of Roumania were lost, and even the great Hungarian Plain itself was in dire peril. All the time the pressure of the blockade sapped the vitality of the German masses, and hampered

and complicated at a thousand points the manufacture of war material.

Fall of Falkenhayn.

In this dark and almost desperate hour the Emperor, interpreting the mood of the German people, turned to the great twin captains of war who had defended the eastern marches so long against heavy odds, and on whose brows still shone the lustre of Tannenberg. On August 28, the morrow of the Roumanian declaration, Falkenhayn was notified by Count Von Lyncker, head of the Emperor's Military Cabinet, that His Majesty had decided to summon Hindenburg and Ludendorff to his presence. Rightly accepting this intimation as dismissal, Falkenhayn resigned forthwith; and that same evening Hindenburg as Chief of the Staff, and Ludendorff as First Quartermaster-General[1] with equal powers, assumed the supreme direction of the Central Empires in the war.

Hindenburg and Ludendorff.

What are the relations between these two men? Hindenburg has described them as those of a happy marriage. "In such a relationship," he writes,[2] "how can a third party clearly distinguish the merits of the individuals? They are one in thought and action, and often what the one says is only the expression of the wishes and feelings of the other. After I had learnt the worth of General Ludendorff, and that was soon, I realized that one of my principal tasks was as far as possible to give free scope to the intellectual powers, the almost superhuman capacity for work and untiring resolution of my Chief of Staff, and if necessary clear the way for him, the way in which our common desires and our common goal pointed. . . . The harmony of our military and political convictions formed the basis of our joint views as to the proper use of our resources. Differences of opinion were easily reconciled, without our relations being disturbed by a feeling of forced submission on either side."

The old Field-Marshal was uplifted by his patriotism and character above jealousy. His great age and the vast changes which had taken place in warfare since he had passed his military prime led him willingly to leave the initiative, the preparation and the execution almost entirely to his volcanic colleague, while he himself in full agreement on the largest decisions came in with ponderous weight to clear obstacles and opposition from the path. Throughout the struggle an absolute unity was presented.

The Usurpation of the German General Staff.

But when we look beneath appearances to the facts, there can be no doubt that Ludendorff managed everything and that Hindenburg was chosen largely to enable him to manage everything. It was in Ludendorff's brain that the great decisions were taken. It was under his competent hand that the whole movement and control of the German armies, and of much more than the armies, proceeded. Ludendorff was the man of the German General Staff. This military priesthood was throughout the dominating and driving power of Germany, not only through the fifty-two months of the war, but to a very large extent in the situation that preceded it and brought it about. The representatives of the General Staff were bound together by the closest ties of professional comradeship and common doctrine. They were to the rest of the Army what the Jesuits in their greatest period had been to the Church of Rome. Their representatives at the side of every Commander and at Headquarters spoke a language and preserved confidences of their own.

The German Generals of Corps and Armies, Army-Group Commanders, nay, Hindenburg himself, were treated by this confraternity to an extent almost incredible, as figureheads, and frequently as nothing more. "The General Staff," writes General von

[1] In the German Army the deputies of the Chief of the General Staff bore the old title of Quartermaster-General.

[2] *Out of my Life.* Marshal von Hindenburg, p. 84.

Moser,[1] "established an underground control of operations behind the backs of the Commanding Generals. It led one prominent General to declare, 'I am fighting the enemy and the General Staff.'" On December 3, 1917, in the Cambrai Battle, Moser himself relates that as Corps Commander he suggested to the Second Army the recapture of Bourlon Wood the next day. To his surprise his project was disapproved and the date fixed for the 9th. He subsequently ascertained that one of his own General Staff Officers had spoken on the telephone to the Second Army and argued against the attack on the 4th and in favour of postponing it to the 9th.

Photo: E.N.A.

THE ASCENDENCY OF H.

On August 28, 1916, at a time when the day was going badly for the Central Empires, Falkenhayn was notified of his impending dismissal. He resigned forthwith and was, on the same day, succeeded by Hindenburg and Ludendorff, the victors of Tannenberg and the Masurian Lakes. This photograph shows Hindenburg, the Kaiser and Ludendorff at a conference during the course of operations on the Western Front.

Every one will remember the extraordinary incident of the visit of Colonel Hentsch to the various Army Headquarters during the Battle of the Marne in 1914 as General Staff representative of the Supreme Command; how on the morning of September 9 he settled all vital matters with Bülow's Chief of the Staff while the old man was still in bed; and how at noon at Kluck's headquarters he gave his orders to the Staff Officer, Kuhl, and neither mentioned Kluck nor asked to see him. Similarly Generals von Lossberg (C.G.S. Sixth Army) and von Kuhl (C.G.S. Rupprecht's group of Armies) speak always, as the records show, in their own names and not those of Sixt von Armin or Rupprecht, whom they neither quote nor appear to consult. A British Staff Officer, whatever the facts, would at least have said, "The Chief or Army Commander wishes." But behind the scenes of the German General Staff all these formalities are dropped. The staffs arrange everything without a word about the authority, opinions or desires of their generals. It

[1] *Ernsthafte Plaudereien über den Welt Kreig.* General von Moser.

Photo: Central News.

ROUMANIAN INFANTRY.

Had events shaped themselves otherwise the brave and well-trained Roumanian army of 500,000 men should have been able to exert a not unimportant influence upon the course of the war. The Roumanian soldiers had already proved themselves to be good troops and, as this picture demonstrates, they were of excellent physique. But Roumania had waited too long. She was presently to share with Serbia the mortification of utter defeat.

is the General Staff which conducts the operations, gives decisions and notifies them to the subordinate formations. Ludendorff throughout appears as the uncontested master. In his numerous conversations with the Chief of the Staff of the Fourth Army, the name of Hindenburg is never mentioned to justify or to support a decision.[1]

This in no way detracts from the fame of Hindenburg, who yielded himself with magnanimity to a process which he was sure was in the best interests of his King and Country. But it is necessary to state what is believed to be the truth.

* * * *

The Roumanian Opportunity Gone.

The golden opportunity for which Roumania had so long watched had not only come. It had gone.

[1] The above facts are taken from the French translation of the captured documents of the German Fourth Army, April 9-30, 1918, and from a French review of them.

As soon as the extent of the Russian victory was plainly apparent, the Cabinet of Bratiano definitely decided to enter the war. The long period of perplexity, hesitation, and bargaining had reached its conclusion. Now or never was the moment for Roumania to strike with all her strength for her national ambition and for the unity and integrity of the Roumanian peoples. Once this decision was taken, not a day should have been lost in acting upon it. While Brusilov's armies were rolling forward in Galicia, while the Bohemian troops of Austria were eagerly surrendering by scores of thousands, while the enormous booty in prisoners, arms and material was being collected by the astonished Russian soldiery, and before the German troops could be drawn from the north and the west to re-establish the shattered front —then was the hour for Roumanian intervention.

A general mobilization of the Roumanian Army, if ordered about June 10, would have enabled considerable Rou-

manian forces to have come into action before the end of that month and while the whole south-eastern front of the Central Powers was in complete disorder. The consequences of this must have been far-reaching and might perhaps have proved decisive.

Rash Precautions.

The habit of bargaining, of waiting upon events, of trying to make hazard sure and wild adventure prudent, had become so deeply ingrained in Bratiano's policy that nearly two months were wasted in negotiations. Before they would commit themselves, the Roumanian Government must have everything settled, must be promised the highest rewards and guaranteed a practically complete immunity. Military conventions regulating the contingent movements of Russian troops and of the Salonica armies, and the supply of arms and munitions, not less than the political, financial and territorial issues, were laboriously and meticulously debated by telegraph with the various Allied Cabinets. The British and French Governments—high in their hopes of impending victory on the Somme—were suddenly eager to secure Roumanian aid at almost any price. Russia, for reasons which will presently be understood, appeared less ardent. Yet it was with Russia that all the principal military arrangements had perforce to be settled. In these discussions the rest of June and the whole of July rapidly slipped away.

Meanwhile Falkenhayn was not idle. Everywhere in the east the German troops stood immovable against the Russians, and from all parts of the German lines reinforcements were scraped together and hurried to the scene of Brusilov's incursion. By the end of June the Russian advance had slackened, and by the middle of July the Austro-

Photo: E.N.A.

KING FERDINAND OF ROUMANIA.

Ferdinand became King of Roumania in October, 1914, in succession to his uncle, Carol, who died on the 10th of that month. Unlike Carol, who was a faithful son of the House of Hohenzollern, he was pro-French; consequently Roumania's long delay in a neutral state was not born of lack of sympathy for the allied cause. Rather was it dictated by motives of expediency. King Ferdinand survived the war and the disasters which it brought upon his country, retaining the throne until his death in 1927.

German front was again continuous and more or less stabilized. The gravest apprehensions upon the attitude of Roumania were justly entertained in Vienna, Berlin and Sofia. And during June and July Austrian and Bulgarian forces were steadily and to the fullest extent possible brought into precautionary positions near the Roumanian frontiers.

It was not until August 27 that Roumania declared war on Austria-Hungary, ordered general mobilization and prepared to launch her armies into Transylvania. She had exacted the following military stipulations from the Allies: first, energetic action by the Russians against the Austrians, particularly in the Bukovina; secondly, two Russian divisions and a cavalry division to be sent on the first day of mobilization into the Dobruja; and thirdly, an offensive by the Allies from Salonica simultaneously with the Roumanian entry into the war.

Not all these measures and their political counterparts put together were worth the month or six weeks of precious time that had been lost in their discussion. Prudence had become imprudence, and safety had been jeopardised by care and forethought. The Teutonic Powers had escaped from the ruin with which the Brusilov's disaster had menaced them before they were called upon to bear the assault of a new antagonist. And this assault was no longer unexpected, but foreseen and so far as their resources allowed prepared against. Nevertheless the apparition in the field of Roumania with twenty-three organized divisions and with over 1,500,000 men capable of bearing arms, and the denial of the Roumanian supplies of corn and oil, seemed both to friend and foe to constitute at this moment one of the most terrible blows which Germany and her reeling partner had yet been called upon to encounter.

* * * *

The Salonica Factor.

While the German and Bulgarian storm-clouds are gathering around Roumania, we must examine the situation on the Salonica front, from which Roumania had been led to expect timely and immediate succour.

The presence of the Allied Army based on Salonica was one of the determining factors in the decision of Roumania. Nearly 400,000 men of five nations—French, British and Serbian, an Italian division and a Russian Brigade—were now scattered along and behind the front established at the foot of the Bulgarian mountain wall. Roumania had stipulated that this army should begin a general offensive against the Bulgarians, if possible a fortnight before, and at the worst simultaneously with, her entry into the war. Both the British and French Governments had agreed to this. Accordingly on Joffre had fallen the duty of ordering General Sarrail who commanded the Allied Army to set his forces in motion not later than August 10. "At the moment which is judged opportune the Army of the Orient will attack, with all forces united, the Allied enemy along the Greek frontier, and in case of success will pursue them in the general direction of Sofia."

This ambitious command did not correspond with the realities. The British Commander-in-Chief, General Milne, reported that an offensive against the Bulgarians would not succeed. He thought that determined troops could hold the Bulgarian position for ever. The extent of the front, the lack of adequate forces, the difficulties of co-operation between three nationalities, the doubtful quality of the Serbians on the exposed left flank, and the inadequate heavy artillery were among the adverse points on which he dwelt. Sir William Robertson recorded his opinion that the Bulgarians were fine fighters in their own country, that the Serbians had not recovered from their disaster, and that not a single British officer was in favour of the enterprise. The British Government had no confidence in General Sarrail, and friction was continuous between him and his British colleagues.

Sarrail's Offensive.

These pessimistic views were not entirely justified by the subsequent facts. The Serbians, after reorganization,

KAVALA. *Photo: E.N.A.*

The town of Kavala was one of the causes of the second Balkan War, Bulgaria claiming it from Greece. As stated in the text, it came once more into prominence in the year 1916 during the German-Bulgarian offensive of that year. The photograph reproduced here shows the old Roman aqueduct on the left and the fortress or citadel on the hill.

training and feeding, showed themselves when the time came implacable troops. But it is remarkable that the British Cabinet, in the face of the reports submitted to them, should nevertheless have joined with the French in encouraging Roumania to count upon an effective offensive by the Salonica Army. There was indeed no means by which the Allied forces in the Balkans could prevent Bulgaria from throwing her main strength against Roumania. In the upshot it was arranged that General Milne with the British should guard Sarrail's right flank in an active defensive, while Sarrail himself was forced to reduce the general offensive ordered by Joffre to demonstrations and an enveloping attack by the Serbians. Even so he had to feed eight divisions along a single line of railway. On the whole front he could muster no more than 14 divisions against 23 Bulgarian and German divisions fortified on strong mountain lines. The date even of these limited operations was retarded until the end of September.

Meanwhile the German-Bulgarians struck first, and though repulsed elsewhere reached the sea and captured a Greek division at Kavala on September 18. In the circumstances it was remarkable that Sarrail should have succeeded to the extent of taking Monastir. On the actual front of attack the forces were almost equal; each mustered 190,000 men and 800 or 900 guns. But the achievement in no way influenced the struggle in which the fate of Roumania was decided. Had all the faults of temperament and character which are charged against General Sarrail been replaced by equally undisputed virtues,

THE ALLIED ADVANCE TO MONASTIR.

Sketch map showing the extent of the advance during the operations which resulted in the capture of Monastir. The two lines represent the respective allied positions at the end of September, 1916, and the end of November in the same year.

no better result could have been obtained.

* * * *

Jeopardy of Roumania.

The perilous position of Roumania became apparent from the moment of her declaration of war. The main portion of the kingdom consisted of a tongue of land about three hundred miles long and a hundred wide between the wall of the Transylvanian Alps on the north and the broad Danube on the south. About the centre of this tongue lay the capital, Bucharest. Beyond the mountains gathered the Austrians and the Germans; behind the Danube the Bulgarians crouched. Four months sufficed to crack Roumania like a nut between these pincers.

A word may be said about each of the Roumanian frontiers. The Danube, which here flows for a great part of its course through a deep trough in the plain and is in many places nearly a mile wide, appeared a trusty barrier. The principal passages at Sistova, Turturkai and Silistria were guarded by fortresses reckoned formidable before the advent of the heavy howitzer. As the Danube descends to its mouth, it encloses between its waters and the Black Sea the province of the Dobruja which Roumania had at the end of the second Balkan war seized without fighting from prostrate Bulgaria. An advance into the Dobruja, left hand on the Danube, right hand on the seashore, stirred every Bulgarian ambition and cut at the very root of the Roumanian tongue.

The mountain range to the north was a more effective defence than the line of the Danube. The Transylvanian Alps rise to a height of six or seven thousand feet by three tiers of forest, of grassy upland and finally of rocky but rounded summits. This rampart is pierced from north to south by four major passes—sudden clefts two or three thousand feet deep and many miles in length, traversed by inferior roads of which the most westerly is the one which follows the Vulkan pass. The Transylvanian Alps turn at their eastern extremity through more than a right angle into the Carpathians, between which and the Russian frontier on the river Pruth lies Moldavia, the northern province of Roumania. Such was the theatre of the new war.

Disposition of Her Armies.

Roumania mobilized on August 27 twenty-three divisions, of which ten were well trained, five less well trained, and the remainder reserve formations, aggregating over 500,000 men. The Roumanian Army was however weak in artillery and ill supplied with ammunition. Her principal arsenal had exploded mysteriously a few days before her entry into the war. She was ill equipped with field telephones, and possessed very few aeroplanes, no trench mortars and no poison gas. Her statesmen seem at first to have cherished the hope—fantastic in view of the past—that Bulgaria would not declare war upon her. When this hope was dispelled on September 1, Roumania continued to trust to the intervention of General Sarrail to hold the Bulgarian strength on the Salonica front. She also hoped that the Germans would be

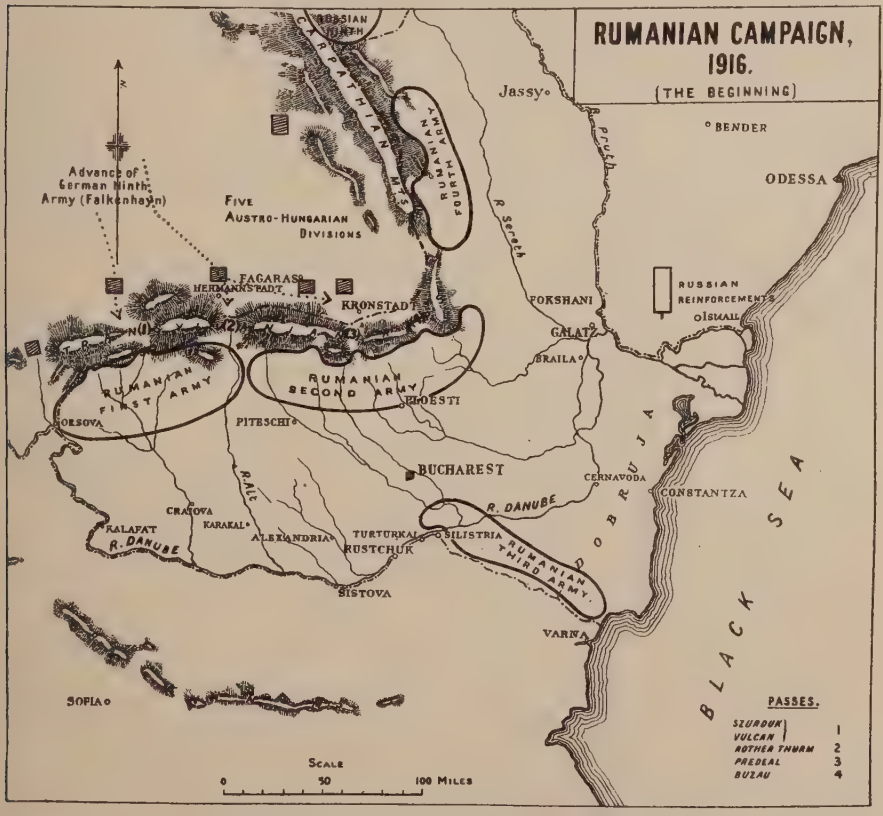
too hard pressed to spare any substantial forces, and she relied upon definite promises of strong and prompt Russian aid.

The Roumanian forces were divided into four armies, of which the Third guarded the Danube and the Dobruja, the First and Second held the passes through the Transylvanian Alps, and the Fourth, hoping later for co-operation from the Second, invaded Transylvania through the Carpathians. A central reserve of 50,000 men guarded Bucharest.

At the outset there were in Transylvania only five tried Austrian divisions, but in the early part of September four German divisions were already approaching. Of these troops Falkenhayn was himself placed in command on September 6. Beyond the Danube and towards the Dobruja three Bulgarian divisions and a cavalry division and part of a German division from the Salonica front were assembled under the redoubtable Mackensen.

Russian Misgivings.

Although the Roumanians had a large numerical superiority, it was impossible to study the war map without anxiety. Mr. Lloyd George, then Secretary of State for War, explained to me fully the situation; and after we had mutually alarmed each other in a long talk at Walton Heath, he wrote a serious though belated warning to the Prime



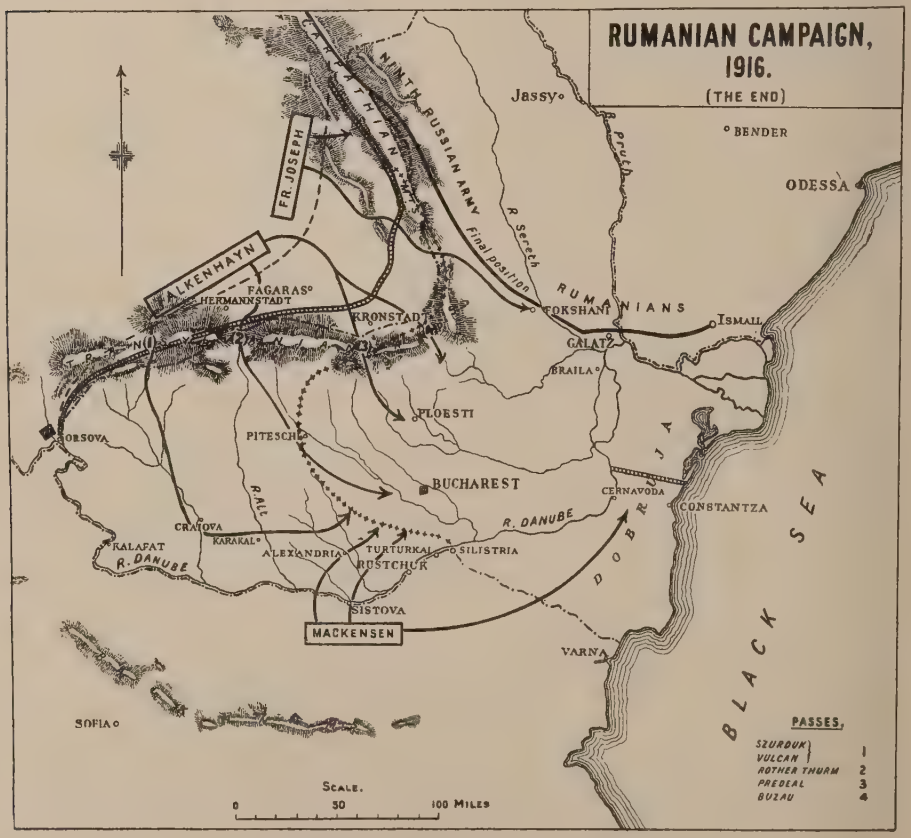
ROUMANIAN CAMPAIGN: THE BEGINNING.

The above map, together with that on the following page, serves to illustrate the progress of the ill-starred Roumanian campaign of 1916. The positions of Roumania's four armies at the outset were as shown here, together with that of the nearest Russian army—the Ninth.

Minister. Sarrail and the Salonica army could not be got into motion. There remained only the Russian aid, and here again fortune was perverse. The treaty which the old King of Roumania had made before the war with Austria-Hungary had led Russia to regard Roumania as a potential enemy. In consequence the south Russian railway system withered away towards the Roumanian frontier, and there was actually a gap of twenty miles between the Russian railhead at Reni and the nearest Roumanian line at Galatz. It was therefore impossible for Russia to come with any speed to the succour of her new ally. Alexeieff and the very able Russian Staff understood the Roumanian problem far better than the impatient western Allies, and their misgivings had been apparent in the lukewarm attitude of Russia towards Roumanian intervention.

Turturkai.

Jubilation at the accession of a new ally was still resounding through the French and British Press when startling news arrived. On September 1 Mackensen invaded the Dobruja. On Sep-



ROUMANIAN CAMPAIGN: THE END.

It will be seen from this map that Roumania had little chance against the concentration of well led armies that came against her. To the south is Mackensen marching against the Dobruja and the fortress of Turturkai. In the north Falkenbayn is probing the passes of the Transylvanian Alps, from which he is presently to drive southward into the heart of Roumania. Further north are the Austrians engaged with the Roumanian Fourth Army west of the Carpathians. The arrows show the extent and direction of the various advances which a little more than three months after Roumania's entry into the war were to result in her utter defeat.

tember 6, with the Bulgarian Army and German howitzers he smashed the Danubian fortress of Turturkai and captured 25,000 Roumanians and 100 guns. Swiftly advancing through the Dobruja, Mackensen had by the end of September come almost abreast of Constanza on the Black Sea, taking the abandoned fortress of Silistria on his way. By the third week in October he had taken Constanza.

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

FIELD-MARSHAL VON MACKENSEN IN BUCHAREST.

Taken in December, 1916, this photograph shows Mackensen watching the entry of Austrian troops into Bucharest. The German Field-Marshal is seen mounted on a white charger.

Leaving half his army to defend the conquered territory by an entrenched line from the Danube to the sea, he brought the remainder, strengthened by a Turkish division and an additional Bulgarian division, across the Danube, opposite Bucharest, which he threatened at a distance of barely forty miles. This menace was not without its object. While the Bulgarian invasion of the Dobruja had been proceeding, Falkenhayn was probing the passes of the Transylvanian Alps and seeking incessantly—now here, now there—to force his way through. The First and Second Roumanian armies however maintained a stout resistance, while the Fourth, which had debouched from the Carpathians, continued to drive the Austrians westward.

But the disaster at Turturkai, the invasion of the Dobruja, and finally Mackensen's menace to Bucharest, had already absorbed the Roumanian central reserve of 50,000 men. General Averescu, placed in command of the southern front, peremptorily demanded that the Roumanian Fourth Army should be recalled from Transylvania, that the Second and Third Armies should be reduced to the minimum compatible with holding the passes, and that the whole strength of Roumania should be thrown against the Bulgarians. This at any rate was a military plan. It was resisted with equal vehemence by General Présan who commanded in the north. The controversy was acute, and the debate well balanced. In the end, as would be expected, a compromise was reached whereby General Présan continued to invade Transylvania with forces too weak to be effective; and General Averescu obtained enough troops from the armies holding the passes to endanger the defence, but not enough to overcome the Bulgarians.

The Closing Jaws.

Roumania had now been at war for two months, and by the beginning of November five additional German divisions and two cavalry divisions had joined Falkenhayn's army. Thus powerfully reinforced, he attacked the Vulkan pass in earnest. By November 26 he had forced his way through and entered the Roumanian plain, descending the valley of the Jiu and incidentally cutting off the Roumanian forces holding the tip of the tongue near Orsova. This movement compromised in succession the defence of the other passes. By the end of November, Falkenhayn had joined hands with Mackensen from across the Danube; and on December 6, after a well-contested three-days' battle between Falkenhayn and Mackensen's armies, together amounting to fifteen divisions, and what was left of the Roumanian forces, he entered Bucharest in triumph. The Roumanians, defending themselves stubbornly, retreated eastward towards the considerable Russian Army which had now at last arrived.

Notwithstanding torrential rains and winter conditions, Falkenhayn and Mackensen followed apace. The roads ceased to exist. The troops were short of food and every necessity. Ludendorff, according to Falkenhayn, sent "floods of telegrams as superfluous as they were unpleasant," [1] but neither winter clothing nor supplies. Still the Germans persevered, and after a series of stern battles mainly against Russian forces, reached the Sereth River on January 7. Here their advance ended. The tongue of Roumania had been torn out by its roots. There remained of that unhappy kingdom only the northern province. In this narrow region around the town of Jassy what remained of the armies which four months before had entered the war so full of hope endured for many months privation and even famine, from which not only thousands of soldiers but far larger numbers of refugees perished lamentably. Thus did Roumania share in the end the hideous miseries of all the Balkan peoples.

[1] *Der Feldzug der 9 Armee*, 1916-17, Part II, pp. 93-100.

The Common Woe.

How unteachable, how blinded by their passions are the races of men! The Great War, bringing tribulation to so many, offered to the Christian peoples of the Balkans their supreme opportunity. Others had to toil and dare and suffer. They had only to forgive and to unite. By a single spontaneous realization of their common interests the Confederation of the Balkans would have become one of the great Powers of Europe, with Constantinople, under some international instrument, as its combined capital. A concerted armed neutrality followed by decisive intervention at the chosen moment against their common enemies, Turkey and Austria, could easily have given each individual State the major part of its legitimate ambitions, and would have given to all safety, prosperity and power. They chose instead to drink in company the corrosive cup of internecine vengeance. And the cup is not yet drained.

* * * *

The Autumn at Verdun.

Meanwhile on the heights of Verdun new figures destined powerfully to sway the course of events began to emerge under the blast of the cannonade. Pétain's most successful commander was a certain General Nivelle, an Artillery officer who by courage and address had won his way from a modest station to the head of an Army Corps. Nivelle's fighting arm was a certain General Mangin, of whom some brief description is required. Mangin belonged to the French Colonial Army, and had made his name in Morocco and Tunis. He had led Marchand's advance guard to Fashoda in 1898. Engaged at the head of a brigade in the opening days of the war, he had won distinction at Dinant and Charleroi. In the widespread breaking of incompetent leaders which followed the opening defeats of the French Army, Mangin succeeded to the command of a dispirited division from whose control a discredited figure had been removed. "After having at our head," wrote a young Royalist who served as a clerk on the staff of this division, "a walking ruin, we actually

possess one of the best generals of the French Army." [1]

Mangin was not to belie this reputation. Bronzed and sombre, thick black hair bristling, an aquiline profile with gleaming eyes and teeth; alive and active, furious, luxurious, privileged, acquisitive—a dozen motor-cars collected from all quarters, including the enemy, in his train as a simple Colonel of Brigade—reckless of all lives and of none more than his own, charging at the head of his troops, fighting rifle in hand when he could escape from his headquarters, thundering down the telephone implacable orders to his subordinates and when necessary defiance to his superiors, Mangin beaten or triumphant, Mangin the Hero or Mangin the Butcher as he was alternately regarded, became on the anvil of Verdun the fiercest warrior-figure of France.

[1] *De Sauret la Honte, à Mangin le Boucher.* Henry Dutheil, p. 88.

Nivelle and Mangin.

During the spring Pétain entrusted the direction of the most important operations to Nivelle, and Nivelle confided their execution in the main to Mangin. When in April after three months of battle Pétain was promoted from Verdun to the command of a group of armies, Nivelle, Mangin still in hand, succeeded to the direction of the struggle.

One of the earliest decisions of the Hindenburg - Ludendorff régime had been to arrest the Verdun offensive; and from the end of August, to the intense relief of the Crown Prince, the German armies before the fortress adopted a purely defensive attitude. The decision, wise in the disastrous circumstances,

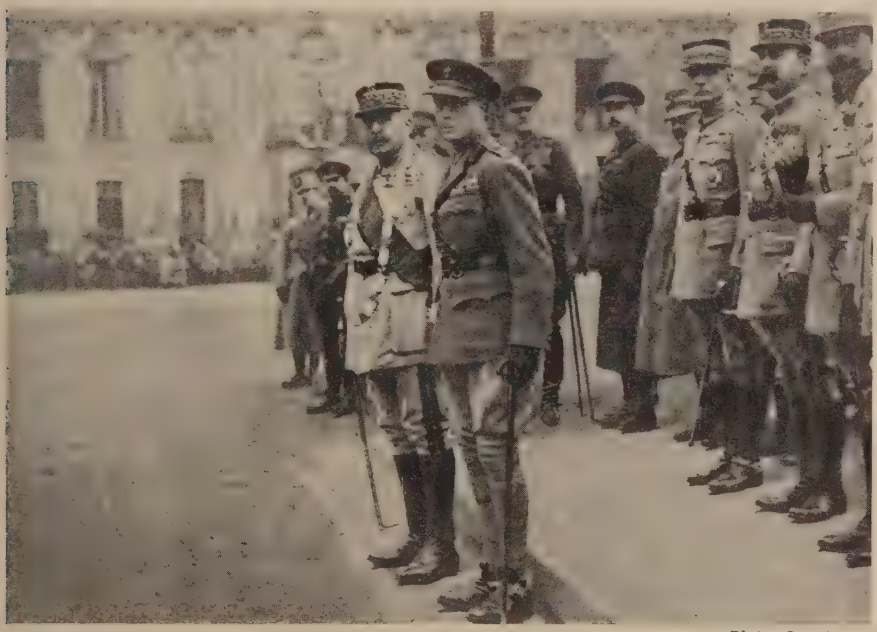


Photo: Copyright.

H.R.H. THE PRINCE OF WALES AND GENERAL NIVELLE.

An interesting picture taken at Beauvais in 1917 a few moments after H.R.H. The Prince of Wales had conferred a British decoration upon General Nivelle. Nivelle succeeded Marshal Joffre as Commander-in-chief at the end of 1916. He had been prominently associated with the defence of Verdun, and to his success there his appointment was in the main due. His offensive of 1917 did not meet with the measure of success for which he had hoped and which he had predicted. Disaffection had reared its head within the ranks of the French army and, on May 15, 1917, Nivelle was dismissed, to be succeeded by Pétain.

presented nevertheless a fine opportunity to the French. The long months of battle had left the German line wedge-shaped. The fort of Douaumont, in actual contact at the very tip, was at once the greatest and the nearest trophy for France. Nothing would set the seal of defeat upon the German effort at Verdun more dramatically than the recapture of Douaumont, famous all over the world. It was on this that Nivelle and Mangin set their hearts.

The preparations were long and thorough. 530 heavy pieces, including a new 16-inch Creusot battery, in addition to the ordinary artillery of the Verdun army, were concentrated upon the German salient—or a gun to every fifteen yards of the front to be attacked.

Photo: E.N.A.

GENERAL MANGIN.

Charles Mangin entered the French Army in 1885, and for many years thereafter his service was mainly abroad, including Senegal, Tongking and Morocco. He took part also in Marchand's expedition to Fashoda. At the outbreak of the Great War he was commanding a brigade, but by June, 1918, had risen to the command of the Tenth Army. He took a prominent part in the great operations of 1917 and 1918 and, as a fighting soldier, his reputation was a high one.

The three divisions which were to make the assault were brought to the highest point of strength and efficiency and trained for more than a month behind the line in the exact parts each was to play. The bombardment began in the middle of October, and fell with fury on all the German defences and organizations. The chief target was the German artillery. By the 20th nearly a third of the German batteries had been put out of action. On the 22nd, at 2 p.m., the French fire on the German front lines was suddenly lifted and the range lengthened. The stratagem was successful. Here then, thought the Germans, was the moment of assault. 158 German batteries, hitherto concealed, opened fire, betraying alike their own position and their system of defensive barrages. Of these 158 batteries only 90 remained in action when the true moment arrived.

Douaumont, October 24.

Three fine days preceded October 24, but on the day itself a dense fog overspread the ground. There was a moment of discussion at the French headquarters whether the attack should be postponed. But Mangin rightly judged that the fog hampered the defence at least as much as the attack. His view prevailed. The French trench mortars, secretly massed on an unprecedented scale—a new feature—opened a terrific fire on the German front line crouching in the shell holes to which their trenches were reduced; and after two hours the French infantry, in the cold passion of calculation and devotion, marched upon their ancient foe. In two hours more all was over. The German wedge was bitten off, the tricolour flew again upon Fort Douaumont, and 6,000 German prisoners were in Mangin's cages. The "corner-stone" of Verdun, as the Germans had precipitately called it, had been regained; and the name of Verdun was registered in history as one of the greatest misfortunes of the German arms.

In this brilliant local victory there lay, as will soon be seen, the seeds of a memorable disappointment.

Photo: Copyright.

FORT DOUAUMONT: OCTOBER, 1916.

Taken from a French military aeroplane a few days before the French attack of October 24, 1916, this photograph shows all that was left of Fort Douaumont at that time. The ground, torn and pock-marked by shells of every calibre, is evidence of the intensity of the artillery duel. The French attack upon this point was successful. Douaumont was wrested from the Germans, and the tricolour flew once more upon what the invaders had called the "corner-stone" of Verdun.

CHAPTER LXII

THE INTERVENTION OF THE UNITED STATES

"Whereas the Imperial German Government have committed repeated acts of war against the Government and the people of the United States of America: Therefore be it resolved by the Senate and the House of Representatives of the United States of America in Congress assembled: That a state of war between the United States and the Imperial German Government which has been thrust upon the United States is hereby formally declared; and that the President be, and he is hereby authorized and directed to employ the entire naval and military forces of the United States and the resources of the Government to carry on war against the Imperial German Government; and to bring the conflict to a successful termination all the resources of the country are hereby pledged by the Congress of the United States."—Congressional Resolution of April 6, 1917.

The Footprints of Destiny—Three Cardinal Mistakes—The U-boats and the Traditions of Sea Warfare—The German Logic—Tirpitz's Premature U-boat Attack—Its Repulse and British Counter-measures—The Chancellor restrains Tirpitz—The Winter Situation in Germany—Two Hundred U-boats—The Dire Decision—"If Victory Beckons"—The Fate of Russia—Her Amazing Recovery—Nicholas II—Limitations of the German Military Outlook—The Value of American Intervention—The American Standpoint—The Rigid Constitution—President Wilson—His Problems—His Efforts to Abstain from War—Increasing Provocation—The Final Rupture—America at War.

THE beginning of 1917 was marked by three stupendous events: the German declaration of unlimited U-boat war, the intervention of the United States, and the Russian revolution. Taken together these events constitute the second great climax of the war.

The Footprints of Destiny.

The order in which they were placed was decisive. If the Russian revolution had occurred in January instead of in March, or if, alternatively, the Germans had waited to declare unlimited U-boat war until the summer, there would have been no unlimited U-boat war and consequently no intervention of the United States. If the Allies had been left to face the collapse of Russia without being sustained by the intervention of the United States, it seems certain that France could not have survived the year, and the war would have ended in a Peace by negotiation, or, in other words, a German victory. Had Russia lasted two months less, had Germany refrained for two months more, the whole course of events would have been revolutionized. In this sequence we discern the footprints of Destiny. Either Russian endurance or German impatience was required to secure the entry of the United States, and both were forthcoming.

Three Cardinal Mistakes.

The total defeat of Germany was due to three cardinal mistakes: the decision to march through Belgium regardless of bringing Britain into the war; the decision to begin the unrestricted U-boat war regardless of bringing the United States into the war; and thirdly, the decision to use the German forces liberated from Russia in 1918 for a final onslaught in France. But for the first mistake they would have beaten France and Russia easily in a year; but for the second mistake they would have been able to make a satisfactory peace in 1917; but for the third mistake they would have been able to confront the Allies with an unbreakable front on the Meuse and on the Rhine, and to have

made self-respecting terms as a price for abridging the slaughter. All these three errors were committed by the same forces, and by the very forces that made the military strength of the German Empire. The German General Staff, which sustained the German cause with such wonderful power, was responsible for all these three fatal decisions. Thus nations as well as individuals come to ruin through the over-exercise of those very qualities and faculties on which their dominion has been founded.

The U-boats and the Traditions of Sea Warfare.

However long the controversy may last, there will never be any agreement between the belligerent nations on the rights or wrongs of the U-boat warfare. The Germans never understood, and never will understand, the horror and indignation with which their opponents and the neutral world regarded their attack. They believed sincerely that the outcry was only hypocrisy and propaganda. The law and custom of the sea were very old. They had grown up in the course of centuries, and although frequently broken in the instance, had in the main stood the stress of many bitter conflicts between nations. To seize even an enemy merchant ship at sea was an act which imposed strict obligations on the captor. To make a neutral ship a prize of war stirred whole histories of international law. But between taking a ship and sinking a ship was a gulf.

The captor of a neutral ship at sea had by long tradition been bound to bring his prize into harbour and judge her before the Prize Courts. To sink her incontinently was odious; to sink her without providing for the safety of the crew, to leave that crew to perish in open boats or drown amid the waves was in the eyes of all seafaring peoples a grisly act, which hitherto had never been practised deliberately except by pirates. Thus old seagoing nations, particularly Britain, France, Holland, Norway and the United States, saw in the U-boat war against merchant ships, and particularly neutral merchant ships, depth beyond depth of enormity. And indeed the spectacle of helpless merchant seamen, their barque shattered and foundering, left with hard intention by fellow-mariners to perish in the cruel sea, was hideous.

The German Logic.

But the Germans were new-comers on salt water. They cared little for all these ancient traditions of seafaring folk. Death for them was the same in whatever form it came to men. It ended in a more or less painful manner their mortal span. Why was it more horrible to be choked with salt water than with poison gas, or to starve in an open boat than to rot wounded but alive in No Man's Land? The British blockade treated the whole of Germany as if it were a beleaguered fortress, and avowedly sought to starve the whole population—men, women and children, old and young, wounded and sound—into submission.

Suppose the issues had arisen on land instead of at sea; suppose large numbers of Americans and neutrals had carried food or shell into the zone of the armies under the fire of the German artillery; suppose their convoys were known to be traversing certain roads towards the front: who would have hesitated for a moment to overwhelm them with drum-fire and blast them from the face of the earth?

Who ever hesitated to fire on towns and villages because helpless and inoffensive non-combatants were gathered there? If they came within reach of the guns, they had to take their chance, and why should not this apply to the torpedoes too? Why should it be legitimate to slay a neutral or a non-combatant on land by cannon if he got in the way, and a hideous atrocity to slay the same neutral or non-combatant by torpedo on the seas? Where was the sense in drawing distinctions between the two processes? Policy might spread its web of calculation, but in logic the path was clear. Yes, we will if necessary kill everyone of every condition who comes

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

BRITISH SUBMARINE: WARD ROOM.

As is evident from the photographs on this and the page following, accommodation in the interior of a submarine is extremely restricted. This was particularly the case with the earlier classes and types.

within our power and hinders us from winning the war, and we draw no distinction between land and sea. Thus the German Naval Staff. But the neutrals took a different view.

Tirpitz's Premature U-boat Attack.

The original driving power behind the U-boat attack on merchant ships was the rasping and energetic personality of Admiral von Tirpitz. We have already seen the fate of his first efforts.

On February 4, 1915, he had proclaimed that from February 18 onward "every Allied merchant vessel found within the waters surrounding the British Isles would be destroyed without its being always possible to avoid dangers to the crews and passengers," and that neutral ships would also be exposed to danger in the war zone. At that time Tirpitz had at his disposal no more than twenty to twenty-five suitable submarines, of which only one-third, say seven or eight, could be on duty at a time.

Having regard to the enormous traffic and numerous harbours of the British Isles as well as to our defensive measures, we considered it certain that the effects of this attack would be comparatively unimportant to the volume of our trade. I therefore announced immediately that we would publish every week the sinkings of merchant vessels effected by the German submarines, together with the number of ships entering and leaving British ports. The result fully justified our confidence, and by May, 1915, Tirpitz's failure to impede sea traffic with such puny resources was apparent to all.

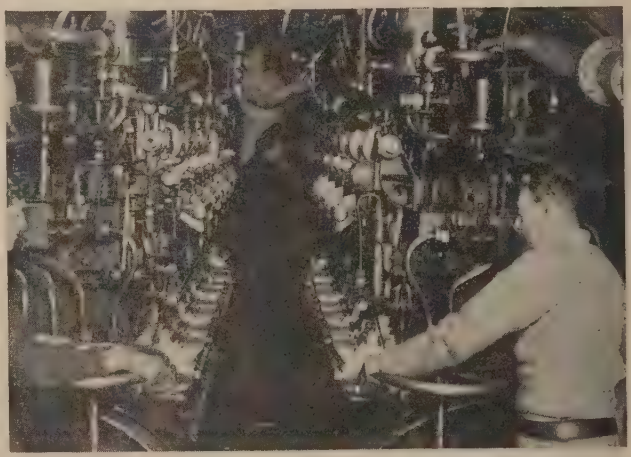


Photo: Imperial War Museum.

BRITISH SUBMARINE: ENGINE ROOM.

The shell of a submersible craft contains a mass of complicated machinery leaving the minimum of space for the officers and crew. The task of controlling engines under such conditions is work for highly skilled men.

Its Repulse and British Counter-measures.

The anger of neutrals and the menacing attitude of the United States which the new form of sea warfare aroused, coupled with its feeble results in practice, convinced German Emperor, Chancellor and Foreign Office after the sinking of the *Lusitania* and *Arabic* that Tirpitz was wrong and must be restrained. The operations of the U-boats were accordingly restricted by successive orders and hampered by vacillations of policy, and by the autumn of 1915 they died away altogether. The premature exposure with inadequate forces of this method of warfare was of immense service to Great Britain. Counter-measures of every kind and on the largest scale were from the beginning of 1915 set on foot by the Admiralty under my direction. Armed small craft were multiplied to an enormous extent, both by building and conversion, the arming of merchantmen was pressed forward, the manœuvres of decoy ships—the "Q-boats," of which more hereafter—were perfected, and every scientific device, offensive and defensive, against the submarines was made the object of ceaseless experiment and production.

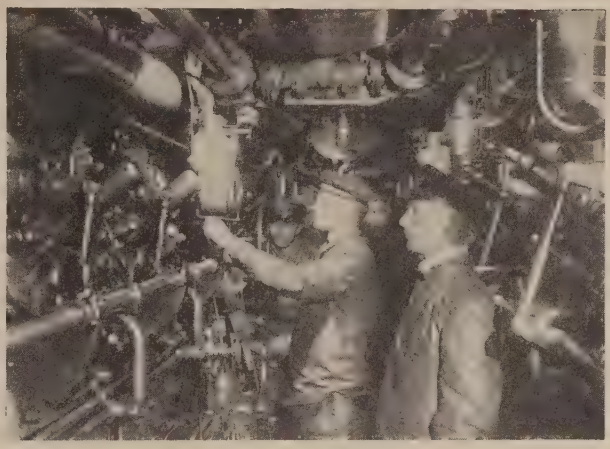


Photo: Imperial War Museum.

GERMAN SUBMARINE: ENGINE ROOM.

As will be seen from this picture, conditions in the German underwater craft were no less arduous than was the case with British boats. There is barely room for the men to move about clear of the moving parts.

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

GERMAN SUBMARINE: TORPEDO ROOM.

Another photograph of the interior of a German submarine showing two of the torpedo tubes. The force of the charge which starts the torpedo on its way need only be sufficiently high to blow the projectile clear of the hull. After this the torpedo proceeds on its course under its own power.

The first U-boat attack failed grotesquely, but the counter-measures which had been launched were continued at full speed by Mr. Balfour and his Board all through 1915 and 1916. To this perseverance after the danger had apparently passed away, we owe in great measure our ultimate salvation.

In a speech which I made in the House of Commons while on leave from the front (March 7, 1916) I endeavoured to

stimulate these precautions by a definite warning.

"In naval war particularly, you must always be asking about the enemy—what now, what next? You must always be seeking to penetrate what he will do, and your measures must always be governed and framed on the basis that he will do what you would least like him to do. My right hon. Friend (Mr. Balfour) showed that the late Board had surmounted some of the very serious and difficult dangers at the beginning of the War; but one he did not mention, the menace of the submarine attack on merchantmen, was overcome by measures taken this time last year of an extraordinary scale and complexity. But although the German submarine campaign has up to date been a great failure, and although it will probably continue to be a failure—here again you cannot afford to assume that it will not present itself in new and more difficult forms, and that new exertions and new inventions will not be demanded, and you must be ready with your new devices before the enemy is ready with his, and your resourcefulness and developments must continually proceed upon a scale which exceeds the maximum you expect from him. I find it necessary to utter this word of warning, which for obvious reasons I should not proceed to elaborate."

At this very time in the spring of 1916 Tirpitz renewed his pressure upon the German Chancellor to permit the resumption of the U-boat war. He marshalled all his forces for the assault on Bethmann-Hollweg. General von Falkenhayn was won over. Admiral von Holtzendorf was enthusiastic. Tirpitz himself in his memorandum of February, 1916, wrote:—

"Immediate and relentless recourse to the submarine weapon is absolutely necessary. Any further delay in the introduction of unrestricted warfare will give England time for further naval and economic defensive measures and cause us greater losses in the end, and endanger quick success. The sooner the campaign be opened, the sooner will success be realized, and the more rapidly and energetically will England's hope of

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

GERMAN SUBMARINE IN ACTION.

In addition to torpedoes, modern submarines are armed with one or more guns. These may be employed for either horizontal or anti-aircraft fire. In action the gun is frequently used, as in this case, to fire across the bows of an enemy vessel prior to an examination of her papers. In the event of further action being found necessary a torpedo would be employed to send the suspected craft to the bottom.

From the painting by Bernard F. Gribble, in the possession of The Most Noble the Marquis of Bute. Copyright reserved.

THE WORK OF THE HUN.

The sinking of merchantmen during the Great War was an all too common occurrence. Not infrequently the submarine had neither time nor facilities to do anything for the luckless crew, who were forced to save themselves as best they could. This illustration, reproduced under the title "The Work of the Hun," represents the sinking of a sailing ship. The crew have been forced to take to their boats until help arrives.

defeating us by a war of exhaustion be destroyed. If we defeat England, we break the backbone of the hostile coalition." [1]

The Chancellor restrains Tirpitz.

Tirpitz accosted the Emperor aggressively on February 23, 1916, and demanded a decision. The Emperor, who no doubt realized that pressure was being brought to bear upon him and his Chancellor from many quarters, summoned a meeting on March 6, from which he deliberately excluded Tirpitz. As the result of this meeting, at which the Chancellor, Falkenhayn and Holtzendorf were present, it was decided to postpone the opening of unrestricted U-boat war indefinitely. Orders which had been actually issued for beginning it on April 1 were cancelled. Tirpitz immediately requested his dismissal, which was accorded to him on March 17. The conflict was however maintained by the Naval Staff, and by Admiral Scheer.

There were available for a U-boat campaign in the spring of 1916 about fifty suitable vessels as against the twenty to twenty-five of the preceding year. Thus Tirpitz could have maintained less than twenty U-boats in constant action. Having regard to the progress of the British countermeasures, there is no reason to believe that this larger number would have imposed a serious strain upon our overseas supplies. But behind the fifty U-boats

[1] *My Memoirs:* Von Tirpitz, Vol. II, p. 419.

in commission no less than one hundred and fifty-seven were building within the German financial year 1916. When these were completed by the beginning of 1917, the issue would for the first time be of a grave character. The attack of twenty-five U-boats in February, 1915, was absurd; the attack by fifty U-boats in February, 1916, would easily have been defeated; but the attack of two hundred U-boats in February, 1917, raised possibilities of a different order.

If Tirpitz, exercising almost superhuman foresight and self-control, had made no submarine attack on commerce until at least two hundred U-boats were ready, and had not provoked us to counter-preparations in the meanwhile, no one can say what the result would have been. Happily the remedy increased with the danger. The U-boat menace was taking vast and terrible dimensions, but

> "The young disease which shall destroy at length
> Grows with its growth and strengthens with its strength."

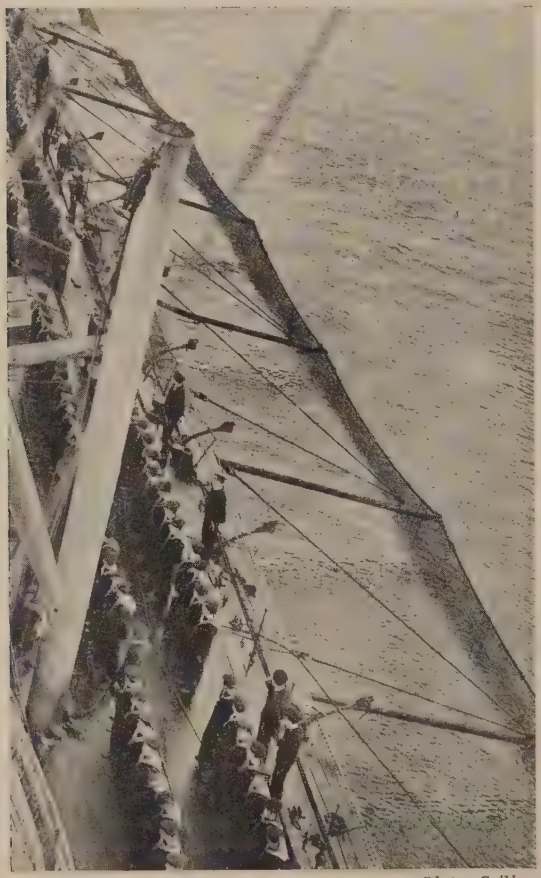


Photo: Cribb.

TORPEDO NETS OUT.

Sunday inspection on board H.M.S. *Queen Mary*, showing the torpedo nets in position. Torpedo nets are made of steel mesh and were originally carried out from the ship's side by booms. In practice, during the war, they were found too cumbrous to be of much service in action and were to a large extent discarded.

The Winter Situation in Germany.

Now however we are coming to the end of 1916, and in the breathing space which winter still affords to warring nations, the German chiefs haggardly surveyed the deadly scene. In spite of the disasters which had followed Falkenhayn's decision to attack Verdun and to neglect the Eastern Fronts, Germany had survived. She had bled the French at Verdun; she had withstood the British upon the Somme; she had repaired the breach made by Brusilov; she had even found strength to strike down Roumania, and had emerged from the year's welter with this trophy of victory. But the sense of frightful peril, of increasing pressure, of dwindling resources, of hard pressed fronts, of blockade-pinched populations, of red sand running out in the time-glass, lay heavily upon the leaders of Germany. In the west the Allies were preparing still more formidable blows for the spring; Russian resistance was unweakened; it was even reviving on a scale almost incredible. But for the first time two hundred U-boats were at hand. Would it be possible for these to starve Britain and so, even if war with the United States resulted, "break the backbone of the Allies?"

"Had we been able," writes

Photo: F. C. Coleman, Newcastle.

DAMAGE CAUSED BY A TORPEDO.

After a glance at the shattered bows of this cargo steamer it will be readily understood how destructive a torpedo explosion can be. In this particular case the bulkheads were sufficiently stout to stand the strains imposed upon them and the steamer was able to reach port in safety. In the majority of instances, however, the damage done is so great that the ship founders within a very short space of time.

Tirpitz, "to foresee in Germany the Russian Revolution, we should perhaps not have needed to regard the submarine campaign of 1917 as a last resource. But in January, 1917, there was no visible sign of the revolution."[1]

Two Hundred U-boats.

During November and December the German Chancellor and the Military and Naval leaders racked the Emperor with their contentions:—Whether 200 U-boats in the hand were worth 120,000,000 Americans across the Atlantic: whether Britannia rules not only the waves but the waters underneath them too. Dire issue, exceeding in intensity the turning points in the struggles of Rome and Carthage!

[1] *My Memoirs:* Von Tirpitz, Vol. II, p. 442.

The Dire Decision.

There is no doubt that the responsibility for the decision rests upon Hindenburg and Ludendorff. Tirpitz was gone. He even argues that the moment for ruthless U-boat war had already passed, and records a somewhat hesitating comment of "Too late." But Main Headquarters had long been converted to the need of using the U-boat weapon at all costs to the full. In Ludendorff they had found a Chief who shrank from nothing, and upon whose mind supreme hazards exercised an evident fascination.

The old Field-Marshal shared or adopted his resolve. He threw his whole weight against the Chancellor. The Admirals chimed in with promises of swift decisive success. The Civil Powers

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

SINKING A STEAMER BY GUNFIRE.

Another picture of a submarine's gun in action taken immediately after a direct hit on a cargo vessel. The submarine in this case was the German boat U 35.

felt the balance turning against them. Their peace overtures had been unceremoniously rejected by the Allies. The stern interchange of telegrams between Hindenburg and Bethmann-Hollweg in the last week of the year marked the end of the Chancellor's resistance. On January 9[1] the decisive conference *à trois* was held at Pless. Ludendorff has published his notes in which the following passages occur :—

"If Victory Beckons."

The Chancellor. When His Majesty orders the intensified submarine operations the Chancellor will endeavour to secure that America will still remain "out." Certain concessions — which have been previously discussed with the Naval Staff — must be made.

[1] The Translation of Ludendorff's *The General Staff and its Problems* gives January 1 as the date of this conference. This is a translator's error.

We must, however, reckon on the entry of America into the war. . . . The decision to embark on the unrestricted U-boat campaign is therefore dependent upon the results we expect from it. Admiral von Holtzendorf offers us the prospect that we shall have England at our mercy by the next harvest. The experiences of the U-boats in recent months, the increased number of boats, the bad economic situation of England, certainly form a reinforcement for luck. Taking it all round the prospects of the unrestricted submarine campaign are very favourable. Of course those favourable prospects are not capable of proof. We must be quite clear that, judging by the military situation, great military blows are scarcely likely to bring us final victory. The U-boat campaign is the "last card." A very serious decision! *But if the military authorities regard the U-boat campaign as necessary*

I am not in a position to oppose them.[1]

The Field-Marshal. We are in a position to meet all eventualities, against America, Denmark, Holland, and even Switzerland.

The submarine operations in cruiser form have hitherto brought us only a slightly greater measure of success. We need the most energetic and ruthless action possible. Therefore the U-boat war must begin not later than February 1, 1917. The war must be brought to a speedy end on account of our Allies, though *we* could continue for some time longer.

The Chancellor. It is to be remembered that the U-boat war may mean postponing the end of the war.

General Ludendorff. The U-boat war will improve the situation even of our armies. The ammunition supply will suffer from the shortage of timber and coal. That means a relief for the troops on the Western Front. We must spare the troops a second Somme battle. Our own experience, the effect of the transport crisis, show that that relief is certain. Moreover, Russia's capacity will be diminished by the shortage of ammunition due to the lack of tonnage. The Siberian Railway will not be enough for Russia by itself.

The Chancellor. On America's eventual entry into the war, her help will consist in the delivery of food to England, financial assistance, the supply of aeroplanes and a force of volunteers.

The Field-Marshal. We are already prepared to deal with that. The chances of the submarine operations are more favourable than they are ever likely to be again. We can and must begin them.

The Chancellor. Yes, we must act if victory beckons.

The Field-Marshal. We shall be reproached later on if we let the moment slip.

[1] Ludendorff's italics.

The Chancellor. The position is certainly better than last September.

General Ludendorff. The measures we shall take against neutrals are in no way provocative. They are purely defensive.

The Chancellor. And suppose Switzerland came into the war or the French marched through that country.

The Field-Marshal. That would not be unfavourable, from the military point of view.[1]

Of the meeting at which the Emperor was present later on the same day,

[1] *The General Staff and its Problems:* Ludendorff. Vol. I, p. 304.

Photo: Cribb.

A TORPEDO ON THE TARGET.

A German submarine sinking a cargo boat by torpedo. The track of the torpedo can be clearly followed from the submarine to the point of impact. The explosion has just taken place, and the damage done has in all probability been sufficient to send the vessel to the bottom.

Photo: Copyright.

DURING THE SINKING OF THE *IVERNIA*.

The *Ivernia* was a Cunard liner employed during the war on transport service. She was sunk in the Mediterranean on New Year's Day, 1917, by an enemy submarine. This photograph, taken from the deck of the sinking transport, shows men struggling in the water and one of the lifeboats about to founder. About one hundred and twenty soldiers were lost and thirty-three members of the crew.

the Chancellor has himself left an account.[1]

"Early in January (1917) I was summoned to G.H.Q. When I arrived in Pless on the morning of the 9th, the decision had *de facto* already been made. The Supreme Command and the Admiral Staff were determined on their part to have U-boat warfare. The Kaiser ranged himself on their side. Compared with the Spring and Summer of 1916, when I had prevented U-boat warfare, the situation had completely altered. Then my opinion had prevailed, because the authority of General von Falkenhayn, in view of the obviously insufficient number of U-boats, had not been great enough to impose a measure which, although it was popular in the circles influenced by the Conservatives, National Liberals and the Navy, was still regarded with scepticism by the majority of the Reichstag. . . .

"With all these considerations in my head, I went to the common audience with the Kaiser on the evening of the 9th January. There right away I found the general atmosphere just as laden as in a conference I had had alone with the Supreme Command at midday. I had the feeling that I had before me men who no longer had any inclination to be diverted by persuasion from their already settled decisions. Admiral Staff and O.H.L.[2] put forward their demands.

"I declared that I could not throw doubt on the military opinion that the war could not be brought to a successful end by action on land alone. Certain success of the U-boat war, in my opinion, could be just as little proved as certain failure. If success was denied then the worst of all ends stood before us. I must appreciate American help higher than the O.H.L. put it. After the reply of the Entente to our Peace offer I could not for the moment indicate any prospect of peace negotiations. In view of the condition of affairs and of the declaration of Field-Marshal von Hindenburg, made with the full weight of responsibility, that our military situation permitted us to take the risk of the certain imminent breach with America, I was not in a position to advise H.M. to oppose himself to the vote of his military counsellors. The decision was then made. In about half an hour the audience with the Kaiser, which was no longer a council, came to an end. *Next day O.H.L. advised the Kaiser to change his Chancellor at once.*"[1]

His capitulation had availed him nothing. It would have been better before history to have gone down with flag flying. No one can doubt what his convictions were, and we now know that they were right. Events forthwith began their new course.

* * * *

The Fate of Russia.

Surely to no nation has Fate been more malignant than to Russia. Her ship went down in sight of port. She had actually weathered the storm when all was cast away. Every sacrifice had been made; the toil was achieved. Despair and Treachery usurped command at the very moment when the task was done.

The long retreats were ended; the munition famine was broken; arms were pouring in; stronger, larger, better equipped armies guarded the immense front; the depôts overflowed with sturdy men. Alexeieff directed the Army and Koltchak the Fleet. Moreover, no difficult action was now required: to remain in presence: to lean with heavy weight upon the far-stretched Teutonic line: to hold without exceptional activity the weakened hostile forces on her front: in a word, to endure—that was all that stood between Russia and the fruits of general victory. Says Ludendorff, surveying the scene at the close of 1916:

[1] My italics—W. S. C.

[1] Bethmann-Hollweg: *Betrachtungen über den Weltkrieg.* Part II, pp. 131-7.

[2] The German G.H.Q. (Grosses Haupt-Quartier), Great Headquarters, was the Kaiser's Headquarters—political, naval and military. O.H.L. (Oberste Heeresleitung), the supreme command of the German Field Army, sometimes translated "the Supreme Command" or "the Main Headquarters," was the military section of the German G.H.Q. Its head was the Chief of the General Staff of the Field Army.

Her Amazing Recovery.

"Russia, in particular, produced very strong new formations, divisions were reduced to twelve battalions, the batteries to six guns; new divisions were formed out of the surplus fourth battalions and the seventh and eighth guns of each battery. This reorganization made a great increase of strength."[1]

It meant in fact that the Russian Empire marshalled for the campaign of 1917 a far larger and better equipped army than that with which she had started the war. In March the Czar was on his throne; the Russian Empire and people stood, the front was safe, and victory certain.

It is the shallow fashion of these times to dismiss the Czarist régime as a purblind, corrupt, incompetent tyranny. But a survey of its thirty months' war with Germany and Austria should correct these loose impressions and expose the dominant facts. We may measure the strength of the Russian Empire by the battering it had endured, by the disasters it had survived, by the inexhaustible forces it had developed, and by the recovery it had made. In the Governments of States, when great events are afoot, the leader of the nation, whoever he be, is held accountable for failure and vindicated by success. No matter who wrought the toil, who planned the struggle, to the supreme responsible authority belongs the blame or credit for the result.

Nicholas II.

Why should this stern test be denied to Nicholas II? He had made many mistakes, what ruler had not? He was neither a great captain nor a great prince. He was only a true, simple man of average ability, of merciful disposition, upheld in all his daily life by his faith in God. But the brunt of supreme decisions centred upon him. At the summit where all problems are reduced to Yea or Nay, where events transcend the faculties of men and where all is inscrutable, he had to give the answers. His was the function of the compass-needle. War or no war? Advance or retreat? Right or left? Democratize or hold firm? Quit or persevere? These were the battlefields of Nicholas II. Why should he reap no honour from them? The devoted onset of the Russian armies which saved Paris in 1914; the mastered agony of the munitionless retreat; the slowly regathered forces; the victories of Brusilov; the Russian entry upon the campaign of 1917, unconquered, stronger than ever; has he no share in these? In spite of errors vast and terrible, the régime he personified, over which he presided, to which his personal character gave the vital spark, had at this moment won the war for Russia.

He is about to be struck down. A dark hand, gloved at first in folly, now intervenes. Exit Czar. Deliver him and all he loved to wounds and death. Belittle his efforts, asperse his conduct, insult his memory; but pause then to tell us who else was found capable. Who or what could guide the Russian State? Men gifted and daring; men ambitious and fierce; spirits audacious and commanding—of these there was no lack. But none could answer the few plain questions on which the life and fame of Russia turned. With victory in her grasp she fell upon the earth, devoured alive, like Herod of old, by worms. But not in vain her valiant deeds. The giant mortally stricken had just time, with dying strength, to pass the torch eastward across the ocean to a new Titan long sunk in doubt who now arose and began ponderously to arm. The Russian Empire fell on March 16; on April 6 the United States entered the war.

* * * *

Limitations of the German Military Outlook.

Of all the grand miscalculations of the German High Command none is more remarkable than their inability to comprehend the meaning of war with the American Union. It is perhaps the crowning example of the unwisdom of basing a war policy upon the computation of material factors alone. The war effort of 120,000,000 educated people,

[1] Ludendorff, Vol. I, p. 305.

Photo: Stanley's Press Agency.

THE RUSSIAN IMPERIAL FAMILY.

One of the last formal photographs to be taken of the Emperor and Empress of Russia and their family. Reading from left to right, the Grand Duchesses, daughters of the Czar, are Marie (born 1899), Olga (1895), Tatiana (1897) and Anastasia (1901). In front, in the centre, is the Czarevitch Alexis (born July 30, 1904). The Imperial family were brutally murdered by the Bolshevists on July 16, 1918, at Ekaterinburg.

equipped with science, and possessed of the resources of an unattackable Continent, nay, of a New World, could not be measured by the number of drilled soldiers, of trained officers, of forged cannon, of ships of war they happened to have at their disposal. It betokens ignorance of the elemental forces resident in such a community to suppose they could be permanently frustrated by a mechanical instrument called the U-boat. How rash to balance the hostile exertions of the largest, if not the leading, civilized nation in the world against the chance that they would not arrive in time upon the field of battle! How hard to condemn the war-worn, wearied, already outnumbered heroic German people to mortal conflict with this fresh, mighty, and once aroused, implacable antagonist!

The Value of American Intervention.

There is no need to exaggerate the material assistance given by the United States to the Allies. All that could be sent was given as fast and as freely as possible, whether in manhood, in ships or in money. But the war ended long before the material power of the United States could be brought to bear as a decisive or even as a principal factor. It ended with over 2,000,000 American soldiers on the soil of France. A campaign in 1919 would have seen very large American armies continually engaged, and these by 1920 might well have amounted to 5,000,000 of men. Compared to potentalities of this kind, what would have been the value of, let us say, the capture of Paris? As for the 200 U-boats, the mechanical hope, there was still the British Navy, which at this

Photo: Topical Press.

THOMAS WOODROW WILSON.

The twenty-eighth President of the United States of America, Woodrow Wilson will be remembered as the man who led his country into the Great War. A man of peace, President Wilson would have kept out of war if that had been possible. Events were too strong for him. At the Peace Conference Wilson wielded a powerful influence. He desired not merely peace, but the assurance of a permanent peace. His Fourteen Points and the idea of a League of Nations were the foundation stones upon which the main structure of the Treaty of Versailles rested.

period, under the ægis of an overwhelming battle-fleet, maintained upwards of 3,000 armed vessels on the seas.

But if the physical power of the United States was not in fact applied in any serious degree to the beating down of Germany; if for instance only a few score thousand Germans fell by American hands; the moral consequence of the United States joining the Allies was indeed the deciding cause in the conflict.

The war had lasted nearly three years; all the original combatants were at extreme tension; on both sides the dangers of the front were matched by other dangers far behind the throbbing lines of contact. Russia has succumbed to these new dangers; Austria is breaking up; Turkey and Bulgaria are wearing thin; Germany herself is forced even in full battle to concede far-reaching Constitutional rights and franchise to her people; France is desperate; Italy is about to pass within an ace of destruction; and even in stolid Britain there is a different light in the eyes of men. Suddenly a nation of one hundred and twenty millions unfurls her standard on what is already the stronger side; suddenly the most numerous democracy in the world, long posing as a judge, is hurled, nay, hurls herself into the conflict. The loss of Russia was forgotten in this new reinforcement. Defeatist movements were strangled on the one side and on the other inflamed. Far and wide through every warring nation spread these two opposite impressions—"The whole world is against us"—"The whole world is on our side."

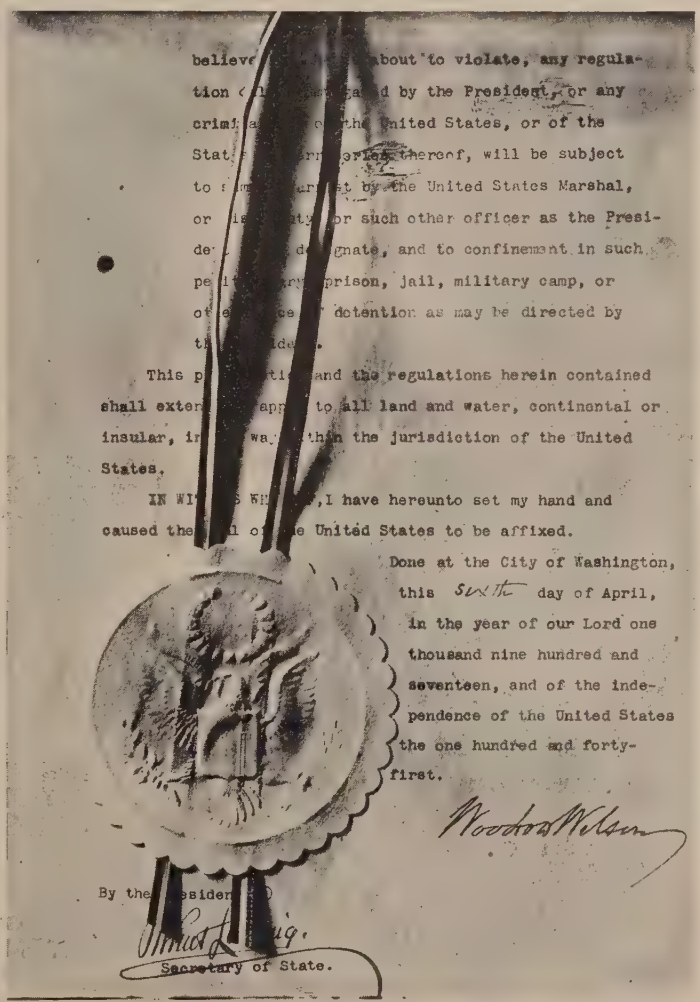
The American Standpoint.

American historians will perhaps be somewhat lengthy in explaining to posterity exactly why the United States entered the Great War on April 6, 1917, and why they did not enter at any earlier moment. American ships had been sunk before by German submarines; as

many American lives were lost in the *Lusitania* as in all the five American ships whose sinking immediately preceded the declaration of war. As for the general cause of the Allies, if it was good in 1917 was it not equally good in 1914? There were plenty of reasons of high policy for staying out in 1917 after waiting so long.

It was natural that the Allies, burning with indignation against Germany, breathless and bleeding in the struggle, face to face with mortal dangers, should stand amazed at the cool, critical, detached attitude of the great Power across the Atlantic. In England, particularly, where laws and language seemed to make a bridge of mutual comprehension between the two nations, the American abstension was hard to understand. But this was to do less than justice to important factors in the case.

The United States did not feel in any immediate danger. Time and distance interposed their minimizing perspectives. The mass of the people engaged in peaceful industry, grappling with the undeveloped resources of the continent which was their inheritance, absorbed in domestic life and politics, taught by long constitutional tradition to shun foreign entanglements, had an entirely different field of mental interest from that of Europe. World justice makes its appeal


believe[illegible] about to violate, any regulation [illegible] by the President, or any [illegible] the United States, or of the State[illegible] territories thereof, will be subject to [illegible] by the United States Marshal, or [illegible] or such other officer as the President may designate, and to confinement in such [illegible] prison, jail, military camp, or other place of detention as may be directed by the President.

This proclamation and the regulations herein contained shall extend to apply to all land and water, continental or insular, in the United States, and within the jurisdiction of the United States.

IN WITNESS WHEREOF, I have hereunto set my hand and caused the seal of the United States to be affixed.

Done at the City of Washington, this Sixth day of April, in the year of our Lord one thousand nine hundred and seventeen, and of the independence of the United States the one hundred and forty-first.

Woodrow Wilson

By the President:

Secretary of State.

Photo: Topical Press.

AMERICA'S DECLARATION OF WAR.

The signed and sealed document which was the reply of the United States to the unrestricted U-boat war. This declaration of war, dated the 7th day of April, 1917, was signed by President Wilson after the resolution had been passed by the Senate on April 4 and by the House on April 6.

to all men. But what share, it was asked, had Americans taken in bringing about the situation which had raised the issue of World Justice? Was even this issue so simple as it appeared to the Allies? Was it not a frightful responsibility to launch a vast, unarmed, remote community into the raging centre of such a quarrel? That all this was overcome is the real wonder. All honour to those who never doubted, and who from the first discerned the inevitable path.

The Rigid Constitution.

The rigid Constitution of the United States, the gigantic scale and strength of its party machinery, the fixed terms for which public officers and representatives are chosen, invest the President with a greater measure of autocratic power than was possessed before the war by the Head of any great State. The vast size of the country, the diverse types, interests and environments of its enormous population, the safety-valve function of the legislatures of fifty Sovereign States, make the focussing of national public opinion difficult, and confer upon the Federal Government exceptional independence of it except at fixed election times. Few modern Governments need to concern themselves so little with the opinion of the party they have beaten at the polls; none secures to its supreme executive officer, at once the Sovereign and the Party Leader, such direct personal authority.

The accident of hereditary succession which brings a King or Emperor to the throne occurs on the average at intervals of a quarter of a century. During this long period, as well as in his whole life before accession, the qualities and disposition of the monarch can be studied by his subjects, and during this period parties and classes are often able to devise and create checks and counter-checks upon personal action.

In limited monarchies where the responsibilities of power are borne by the Prime Minister, the choice of the nation usually falls upon statesmen who have lived their lives in the public eye, who are moreover members of the Legislature and continuously accountable to it for their tenure. But the magnitude and

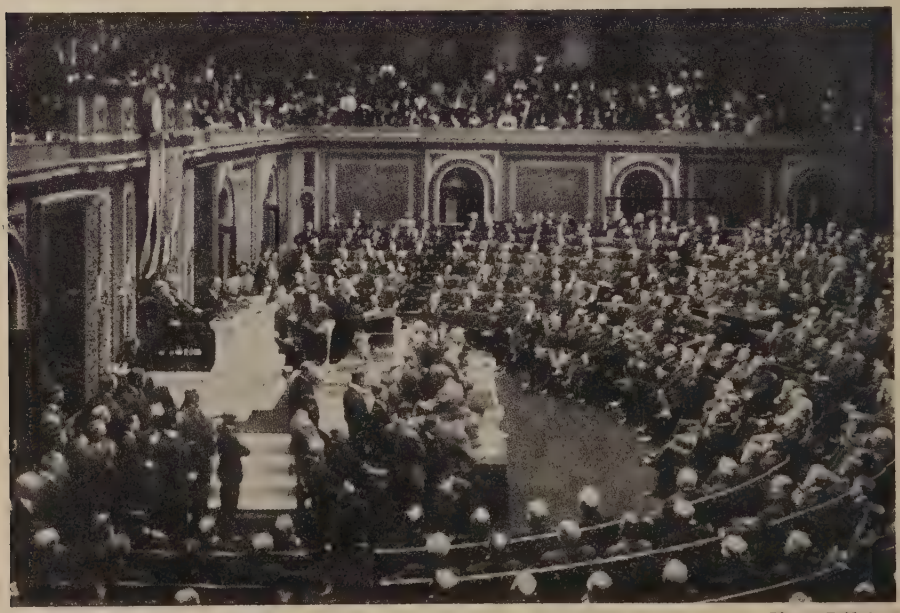


Photo: E.N.A.

AMERICA'S ENTRY INTO THE WAR.

The scene in Congress on the occasion of President Wilson's demand that the existence of a state of war between the U.S.A. and Germany should be declared.

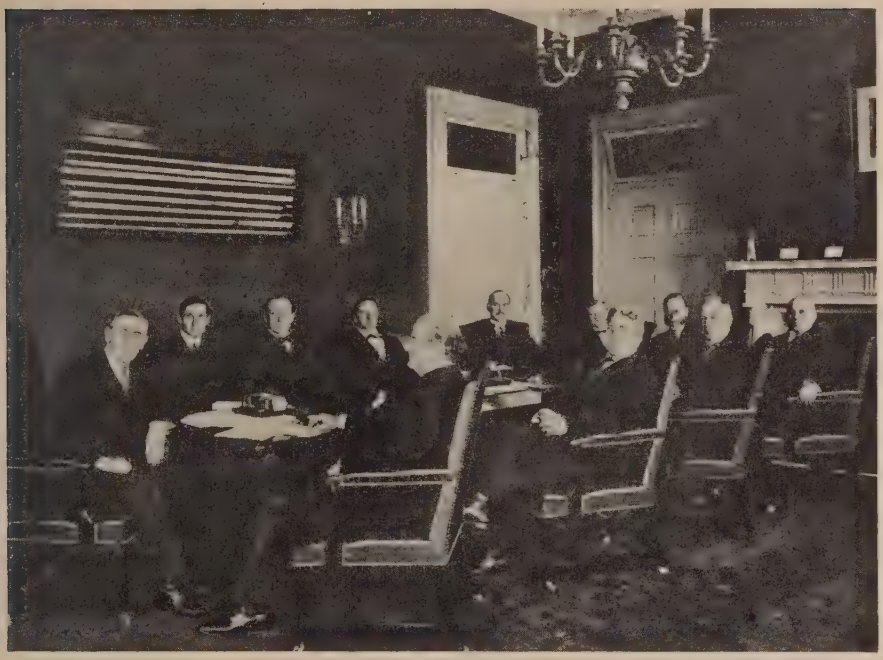


Photo: E.N.A.

AMERICA'S FIRST WAR CABINET.

America entered upon the Great War as a united nation. She had waited long in a state of doubt and uncertainty. When the decision was at last taken there was no more hesitation; America made up her mind to see the war through. President Wilson is seen here with the members of the first War Cabinet. Reading from the left hand of the President and passing round the table the members are Mr. Wm. Gibbs McAdoo, Secretary of the Treasury; Mr. James Clark McReynolds, Attorney-General; Mr. Josephus Daniels, Secretary of the Navy; Mr. David Franklin Houston, Secretary of Agriculture; Mr. William B. Wilson, Secretary of Labour; Mr. William C. Redfield, Secretary of Commerce; Mr. Franklin Knight Lane, Secretary of the Interior; Mr. Albert Sidney Burleson, Postmaster-General; Mr. Lindley M. Garrison, Secretary of War, and Mr. William Jennings Bryan, Secretary of State.

the character of the electoral processes of the United States make it increasingly difficult, if not indeed already impossible, for any life-long politician to become a successful candidate for the Presidency. The choice of the party managers tends more and more to fall upon eminent citizens of high personal character and civic virtue who have not mingled profoundly in politics or administration, and who in consequence are free from the animosities and the errors which such combative and anxious experiences involve. More often than not the champion selected for the enthusiasms and ideals of tens of millions is unversed in State affairs, and raised suddenly to dazzling pre-eminence on the spur of the moment.

The war-stained veterans of the party battle select, after many fierce internal convulsions, a blameless and honourable figure to bear aloft the party standard. They manufacture his programme and his policy, and if successful in the battle install him for four years at the summit of the State, clothed thenceforward with direct executive functions which in practical importance are not surpassed on the globe.

Like all brief generalizations upon great matters, the foregoing paragraphs are subject to numerous and noteworthy exceptions. But President Wilson was not one of them. In all his strength and in all his weakness, in his nobility and in his foibles, he was, in spite of his long academic record and brief governorship,

Photo: E.N.A.

RECRUITING POSTER U.S.A.

An arresting recruiting poster issued by the military authorities of the United States of America. In its central idea this example bears a strong similarity to the well-known Lord Kitchener poster reproduced on page 132.

an unknown, an unmeasured quantity to the mighty people who made him their ruler in 1912. Still more was he a mystery to the world at large. Writing with every sense of respect, it seems no exaggeration to pronounce that the action of the United States with its repercussions on the history of the world depended, during the awful period of Armageddon, upon the workings of this man's mind and spirit to the exclusion of almost every other factor; and that he played a part in the fate of nations incomparably more direct and personal than any other man.

President Wilson.

It is in this light that the Memoirs of Colonel House acquire their peculiar interest. In these pages we see a revelation of the President. Dwelling in the bosom of his domestic circle with the simplicity and frugality of Nicholas II, inaccessible except to friends and servitors—and very sparingly to them—towering above Congress, the Cabinet his mere implement, untempered and undinted in the smithy of public life, and guided by that "frequent recurrence of first principles" enjoined in the American Constitution, Woodrow Wilson, the inscrutable and undecided judge upon whose lips the lives of millions hung, stands forth a monument for human meditation.

His Problems.

First and foremost, all through and last, he was a Party man. His dominating loyalty was to the great political association which had raised him to the Presidency, and on whose continued prosperity he was sincerely convinced the best interests of mankind depended. We see him in the height of the American war effort, when all that the Union could give without distinction of class or party was lavished upon the Government of the day, using his natural position without scruple or apparent self-examination to procure the return to Congress of only those representatives whose names were on the Democratic ticket.

Under his régime there were none of those temporary sacrifices of party rancour which were forced on European countries by their perils. The whole power and prestige of the American nation at war was politically impounded so far as possible by the office holders of the day and the

party machine. This bred a hatred among political opponents whose sons were fighting, whose money was poured out, whose patriotism was ardent, which as soon as the fighting stopped, proved fatal to President Wilson and his hopes. Next he was a good American, an academic Liberal, and a sincere hater of war and violence. Upon these easily harmonized impulsions there had fallen in intense interplay such of the stresses of the European war as rolled across the Atlantic, and all the internal pressures of American policy. He was confronted with four separate successive questions which searched his nature to its depths. How to keep the United States out of the war? How to win the Presidential election in 1916? How to help the Allies to win the war? and lastly, How to rule the world at its close?

He would have been greatly helped in his task if he had reached a definite conclusion where in the European struggle Right lay. Events like the German march through Belgium, or the sinking of the *Lusitania,* had a meaning which was apparent to friend and foe. They both proclaimed the intention to use force without any limit of forbearance to an absolute conclusion. Such a prospect directly affected the interests and indeed the safety of the United States.

The victory of Germany and the concomitant disappearance of France and the British Empire as great Powers must, after an uncertain interval, have left the peaceful and unarmed population of the United States nakedly exposed to the triumph of the doctrine of Force without limit. The Teutonic Empires in the years following their victory would have been far stronger by land and sea than the United States. They could easily have placed themselves in a more favourable relationship to Japan than was open to the United States. In such a situation their views upon the destinies of South America could not have been effectively resisted. Immense developments of armed force would in any case have been required in the United States, and sooner or later a new conflict must have arisen in which the United States would have found herself alone.

His Efforts to Abstain from War.

President Wilson did not however

Photo: E.N.A.

RECRUITING POSTER FOR THE NAVY: U.S.A.

This poster, and that on the preceding page, are striking examples of American poster art. Both are somewhat finer in treatment than the average. Both are forceful and direct.

during the first two and a half years of the war allow his mind to dwell upon the German use of force without restraint, and still less upon the ultimate consequences of its success. He did not therefore feel that American interests were involved from the outset in the European struggle. He distrusted and repressed those sentiments of indignation which the scenes in Belgium or the sinking of the *Lusitania* aroused in his breast. He did not truly divine the instinct of the American people. He underestimated the volume and undervalued the quality of the American feeling in favour of the Allies. Not until he was actually delivering his famous war message to Congress did he understand where, in the vast medley of American opinion, the dominant will-power of the nation lay and had always lain. Not until then did he move forward with confidence and conviction; not until then did he restate the cause of the Allies in terms unsurpassed by any of their own statesmen; not until then did he reveal to the American people where in his judgment world-right was founded, and how their own lives and material interests were at stake.

Increasing Provocation.

The desperate action of the German War-Leaders left him in the end no loop-hole of escape. On January 31, Germany informed the United States of her intention to begin the unrestricted submarine campaign. On February 3, the German Ambassador at Washington was given his passports, the United States representative at Berlin was recalled, and the severance of diplomatic relations with Germany was announced by the President to Congress.

But Mr. Wilson had still another line

Photo: Photopress.

RECRUITS IN NEW YORK.

In America, as in Britain, the response to recruiting appeals was brisk. There was no lack of suitable material, and the man-power of the United States, if it had been necessary to draw upon it to the full, must, in the end, have brought about the downfall of the Central Powers. Soldiers are seen here leaving a recruiting station in New York.

Photo: Record Press.

GERMAN LINERS INTERNED.

German ships interned in America during the war represented a heavy tonnage. It was estimated that ninety-eight German vessels found sheltering in American harbours were seized or otherwise dealt with on the entry of the United States into the conflict. The docks shown here are those at Hoboken, New Jersey, as they were in 1917.

of defence. He declined to believe that any "overt act" would follow the declaration of the German intention. On February 26 the virtual arrest of United States shipping through fear of German attack forced him to ask Congressional authority to arm American merchant ships. On February 26 an American ship was sunk and eight Americans drowned.

Meanwhile the British Intelligence Service had ascertained that Herr Zimmermann, the German Foreign Secretary, had instructed the German Minister in Mexico to make an alliance with Mexico in the event of war between Germany and the United States, and to offer as an inducement to the Mexicans the United States territories of Texas, Arizona and New Mexico. This document, which dealt also with the possibilities of ranging Japan against the United States, was published by the American Government on March 1. During March four American vessels were sunk with the loss of 12 American lives. On April 1, the *Aztec* was sunk and twenty-eight Americans drowned. On the 2nd, President Wilson demanded from Congress a declaration that a state of war existed between the United States and Germany.

Step by step the President had been pursued and brought to bay. By slow merciless degrees, against his dearest hopes, against his gravest doubts, against his deepest inclinations, in stultification of all he had said and done and left undone in thirty months of carnage, he was forced to give the signal he dreaded and abhorred. Throughout he had been beneath the true dominant note of American sentiment. He had behind his policy a reasoned explanation and massive argument, and all must respect the motives of a statesman who seeks to spare his country the waste and horrors of war. But nothing can reconcile what he said after March, 1917, with the guidance he had given before. What he did in April, 1917, could have been done in May, 1915. And if done then what abridgment of the slaughter; what sparing of the agony; what ruin, what catastrophes would have been prevented; in how many million homes would an empty chair be occupied to-day; how different would be the shattered world in which victors and vanquished alike are condemned to live!

But anyhow all was settled now. "A drunken brawl," "Peace without victory," where were these festering phrases on April 2? Amid the clink and clatter of a cavalry escort the President has reached the Senate. He is reading his message to Congress and to mankind. Out roll the famous periods in which the righteousness of the Allied cause was finally proclaimed.

The Final Rupture.

"Vessels of every kind, whatever their flag, their character, their cargo, their destination, their errand, have been ruthlessly sent to the bottom without warning and without thought of help or mercy for those on board, the vessels of friendly neutrals along with those of belligerents. Even hospital ships and ships carrying relief to the sorely bereaved and stricken people of Belgium, though the latter were provided with safe-conduct through the proscribed areas by the German Government itself, and were distinguished by unmistakable marks of identity, have been sunk with the same reckless lack of compassion or of principle. . . .

"The peace of the world is involved and the freedom of its peoples, and the menace to that peace and freedom lies in the existence of autocratic governments backed by organized force which is controlled wholly by their will, not by the will of their people. . . . The world must be made safe for Democracy. . . . The right is more precious than peace, and we shall fight for the things we have always carried nearest our hearts—for Democracy, for the rights of those who submit to authority to have a voice in their own governments, for the rights and liberties of small nations, for a universal dominion of right by such a concert of free people as shall bring peace and safety to all nations and make the world itself at last free."

America at War.

In response to all of this the House of Representatives on April 6 resolved that a state of war was formally declared, and that "to bring the conflict to a successful termination all the resources of the country are hereby pledged by the Congress of the United States."

From the Atlantic to the Pacific the call was answered and obeyed. Iron laws of compulsory service, reinforced by social pressures of mutual discipline in which the great majority of the population took part, asserted an instantaneous unity of opinion. No one stood against the torrent. Pacifism, indifference, dissent, were swept from the path and fiercely pursued to extermination; and with a roar of slowly gathered, pent-up wrath which overpowered in its din every discordant yell, the American nation sprang to arms.

CHAPTER LXIII

A POLITICAL INTERLUDE

The Coalition Government in 1915—The Conscription Issue—The War Policy Committee's Report—Mr. Asquith and Lord Kitchener—Temporizing in Peace and War—The Conscription Crises of January and April, 1916—Lord Northcliffe and the Press—The Balance Destroyed—Politicians *v.* Generals—Lord Northcliffe's Undue Power—Mr. Asquith's Imprudent Disdain—The Rejected Remedy—Discontent of the Conservative Party—Mr. Bonar Law and Sir Edward Carson—A Crucial Division—The Potential Triumvirate—Lloyd George Challenges Asquith—Lloyd George Prime Minister—My Exclusion—The Secret Session—My Survey of the War—Deepening Peril—Lloyd George Undaunted—His Qualities, Energy and Resolution.

IT is now necessary to return to those domains of British politics which we quitted after the formation of the Coalition Government at the end of May, 1915.

The Coalition Government in 1915.

It was then observed that the new Cabinet, although composed of a large number of eminent and upright men, was a cumbrous and unsatisfactory instrument for the waging of a great war. From the outset certain remarkable cleavages and personal currents were apparent. These cleavages and currents did not follow regular Party lines, but responded rather to the shades of temperament and opinion found in every Party. There was the old Liberal school gathered round the Prime Minister, which was reluctant to proceed to drastic domestic measures for the conduct of the war. They were not without their affinities among the Conservatives. This school was deeply impressed with the financial difficulties arising out of the enormous payments we were forced to make to the United States to equip ourselves and our Allies on the greatest scale. They were averse from proceeding to extremes in the industrial sphere in order to procure the greatest output of munitions. Above all, they were opposed to the principle of compulsory service to maintain the armies in the field. It was upon this issue that the main division of opinion and feeling crystallized.

The Conscription Issue.

Of course, the counsel of perfection at the outbreak of a life-and-death struggle would have been for Parliament to decree universal service. In this way the terrible burdens of war could have been justly apportioned throughout the whole nation, and the needs of the fighting services whether in men or material scientifically regulated from month to month. It would not have been necessary to keep hundreds of thousands of volunteers training with the Colours long before there was a rifle to put in their hands, for fear that at a later date their offer to serve might no longer be forthcoming. But these logical and symmetrical conceptions were not in harmony with the British habit of mind. The psychological moment of the first awful plunge into war was allowed to pass, and in a few weeks we reached a period in which compulsory military service was obviously unnecessary. Hundreds of thousands of volunteers overwhelmed the recruiting offices to fill the army and such military organizations as could be improvised beyond it. Before the first three months of the war were over, it was clear that whatever else Britain might lack, it was not citizens ready to fight in her defence. Indeed, the danger was lest too many should

quit the vital industries of the nation for the firing line.

This condition continued until the middle of 1915, but in June and July of that year another phase supervened. The failure of Russia made it certain that the war would last for years. The delivery of rifles, equipment and munitions, and the advance in the training of the Kitchener armies, made possible a large and rapid increase of the British forces actually in the field. The wastage of men grew larger every day. Thirty-five British divisions were already serving on the various fronts, and as many more were steadily approaching readiness at home. Sending a division to the front was like lighting a new lamp which burned away its oil at a remorseless rate; it was like opening a new tap in a cistern. Soon there would be at least seventy such taps drawing unceasingly upon the accumulated store of voluntary effort. Over 3,000,000 men had already come forward freely. They represented all that was best and strongest in the patriotism of the British nation. By the summer of 1915 the outflow was already greater than the intake.

The Cabinet Committee on War Policy which sat during June and July saw plainly that armies of seventy divisions, still less of one hundred divisions, could not be maintained in the field during 1916 without entirely new measures. The strict Liberal school, headed by the Prime Minister, favoured a further effort at voluntary recruiting. Most of the Conservative Ministers, supported by Mr. Lloyd George and myself, were convinced that immediate compulsion was unavoidable. It was in this sense that I drew up a report to the Cabinet in July, 1915, which was signed by Mr. Chamberlain, Lord Curzon, Lord Selborne and others. This report had concluded as follows:

The War Policy Committee's Report.

"We cannot afford, as in Germany or France, to sweep into the army the great mass of the military manhood of the country. Neither can we afford to take men indiscriminately for military service as they present themselves, without regard to their individual services or their usefulness in other spheres. With us the problem is more complex; the quality of the effort must be higher and more varied; the need for control and organization even more vital.

"Of all the belligerent nations we are the one which can least afford to take a married man of 40 while a bachelor of 25 is idle. It is not wise to take a skilled munition worker for the front while a private domestic remains at home. We ought not to let one district be depleted through its patriotism of the indispensable minimum of agricultural or unskilled labour, while in another the recruiters have made practically no headway. We cannot close whole industries to recruiting even the most suitable men, while in others we sweep every man, even up to the oldest father of a family, into the line of battle. We cannot afford to fill our marching battalions with an undue proportion of men past their prime. We cannot afford to let a military male needed for the army do work which could be done by a woman, a boy, or an older man. Greater efforts in national organization are required to remedy these defects, and thus ensure in all its various forms the maximum development of war energy among our people."

Mr. Asquith and Lord Kitchener.

Lord Kitchener, however, did not support these views. He was rightly proud of the wonderful response which had attended his successive appeals for volunteers. He indulged himself in the belief that his countrymen would give him personally whatever numbers he thought right to demand. He therefore leaned to the side of Mr. Asquith, and turned the balance against the adoption of compulsory service at this time. In September, after the losses of Loos had shown what the strain of 1916 would be, the tension between the two groups in the Cabinet became very acute. So grave indeed did it become that a thorough discussion in full Cabinet would have broken up the Government. Therefore, as sometimes happens, the topic which

Photos: Hoppé; Elliott & Fry; Maull & Fox.

FOUR GREAT FIGURES OF THE WAR YEARS.

Whole volumes could be written upon the efforts put forth by the British people during the years 1914–18. Men and women of every station in life carried out the tasks allotted to them and added their contribution, big or little, to the common stock of achievement. Upon those in high places rested responsibilities of crushing weight. It was fortunate for the country that the backs of her rulers were broad enough to bear them. The four men whose portraits are reproduced above are too well known to stand in need of introduction here. Each in his own sphere rendered services entitling him to the nation's gratitude. *Top row, from left to right:* Lord Carson; Lord Northcliffe. *Bottom row, from left to right:* Lord Curzon; Lord Derby.

Photo: L.N.A.

RECRUITS UNDER THE DERBY SCHEME.

The Derby Scheme, described in the text and elsewhere as a final effort for voluntary enlistment, brought in recruits in large numbers. Initiated in October, 1915, under the direction of Lord Derby, the movement served the needs of the hour. As the months passed, however, and it became apparent that the war must be one of long duration, it became necessary to adopt sterner methods in order to sustain hard pressed divisions at fighting strength.

filled all minds became unmentionable in Council, and many weeks slipped away in deadlock.

At last in the middle of October a gathering of nine Ministers, including Mr. Lloyd George and myself, met at Lord Curzon's house and resolved at all costs to bring the question to a head. Confronted with the crisis, the daily aggravation of which was apparent, Lord Kitchener and the Prime Minister together produced a new and far-reaching scheme for what was avowedly the final effort of voluntary enlistment. Lord Derby was brought forward to head this movement, and the scheme was presented to the Cabinet as a decision already taken. By this means the Cabinet crisis, with the long series of resignations threatened on both sides, was for the time being staved off.

Temporizing in Peace and War.

There is an extraordinary contrast between the processes of thought and methods of management required in War and those which serve in Peace. Much is gained in Peace by ignoring or putting off disagreeable or awkward questions, and avoiding clear-cut decisions which if they please some, offend others. It is often better in Peace to persist for a time patiently in an obscure and indeterminate course of action rather than break up or dangerously strain a political combination. Under a popular and democratic form of government, where enormous numbers of people have a right to be consulted, and all sorts of personalities, forces and interests have their legitimate interplay upon the course of public affairs, compromise is very often not merely necessary but actually beneficial. The object in time of Peace is often to keep the nation undisturbed by violent passions, and able to move forward in a steady progress through the free working of its native energies and

virtues. Many an apparently insoluble political problem solves itself or sinks to an altogether lower range if time, patience and phlegm are used.

British politicians and Parliamentarians, particularly those called upon to lead great parties, are masters in all these arts, and if after four or five years of power they have succeeded, without provoking crises in the State or divisions among their supporters, in achieving large national objects and enabling public opinion to carry in its own way and its own time important social or political reforms, they justly deserve their place in history.

In War everything is different. There is no place for compromise in War. That invaluable process only means that soldiers are shot because their leaders in Council and camp are unable to resolve. In War the clouds never blow over, they gather unceasingly and fall in thunderbolts. Things do not get better by being let alone. Unless they are adjusted, they explode with shattering detonation. Clear leadership, violent action, rigid decisions one way or the other, form the only path not only of victory, but of safety and even of mercy. The State cannot afford division or hesitation at the executive centre. To humour a distinguished man, to avoid a fierce dispute, nay, even to preserve the governing instrument itself, cannot, except as an alternative to sheer anarchy, be held to justify half-measures. The peace of the Council may for the moment be won, but the price is paid on the battlefield by brave men marching forward against unspeakable terrors in the belief that conviction and coherence have animated their orders.

* * * *

Photo: L.N.A.

A ONCE FAMILIAR ARMLET.

Men enlisted under the Derby Scheme were entitled to wear a distinctive armlet. The man on the right of the photograph is wearing the badge once so commonly to be observed up and down the country. This picture, taken late in 1915, shows a recruit reading the proclamation calling up the first four of the Derby groups.

The Conscription Crises of January and April, 1916.

It was evident that the Derby scheme could only be a palliative. Although the response was considerable, the maintenance of the armies even on a seventy-division basis through 1916 and 1917 which must also be contemplated, was in no way provided for.

Early in January, under the imperious force of events, the Cabinet crisis renewed itself with violent intensity. And now the grim necessity of facts was reinforced by a movement of a moral character exciting the passions of enormous masses of people. Three and a half million men had volunteered. They were not enough. Were they in virtue of their voluntary engagement to be sent back to the front no matter how often they were wounded? Were elderly, weakly, shattered volunteers to be pressed into the conflict while hundreds of thousands of sturdy youths lived as far as possible their ordinary life?

Were the citizens of the Territorial Force or soldiers of the Regular Army whose engagements had expired to be compelled to continue, while others who had made no sacrifice were not even to be compelled to begin? From three and a half million families whose beloved breadwinner, whose hero, was giving all freely to the country's cause—families representing the strongest elements on which the life of the nation depended—arose the demand that victory should not be delayed and slaughter prolonged because others refused to do their duty. At last, at the end of January, Lord Kitchener changed sides and Mr. Asquith gave way. In the end only one Minister, Sir John Simon, resigned from the administration. A Conscription Bill was presented to Parliament and swiftly passed by overwhelming majorities.

The new Act was however, as might be expected from the internal struggle which had produced it, an unsatisfying compromise. It neither secured the numbers of men that would be needed, nor did it meet the now fierce demand for equalization of sacrifice. In April a new crisis upon the extension of compulsion developed in the Cabinet. The previous struggle had left its marks on both sides, and differences of temperament of a profound character had been revealed between colleagues to all of whom the national cause was equally dear. This time it seemed certain that Mr. Lloyd George would resign and the Cabinet be broken up, and plans were elaborated to form a strong Opposition pledged to the enforcement of extreme war measures.

It was suggested that the Leaders of such an opposition in the House of Commons should be Mr. Lloyd George and Sir Edward Carson, and I was urged from many quarters to take my place at their side. The Scottish battalion I had been commanding for some months in Flanders having been disbanded through the lack of men, I was accorded leave to return to the Parliamentary sphere. In May, Parliament appointed by Statute two Committees of Inquiry into the operations in Mesopotamia and at the Dardanelles, and I found myself immediately involved for nearly a year in a continued and harassing defence of my own responsibilities as set forth earlier in this account. It is from the standpoint of a private member not without information upon secret matters that I record the events of the next twelve months.

* * * *

Lord Northcliffe and the Press.

The career of the British newspaper Press in the Great War is a definite part of history. No account which excluded its influence would be true. The fortunes of the Press were also a romance centring round the extraordinary personality of Lord Northcliffe, and no story could present more vivid contrasts of strength and weakness. Never was Press control in any country so effective as in Great Britain during the first six months of the war. To a rigorous Government censorship was added an even more effective internal restraint exerted by the public spirit of the Newspaper Proprietors' Association. Criticism was mute, and facts were selected and presented only in a spirit of confidence and hope.

By permission of the British Museum.

LORD NORTHCLIFFE IN GERMAN EYES.

It was the German custom, during the war years, to strike medallions intended to commemorate, or hold up to ridicule, individuals whose achievements had been gratifying or otherwise to the German people. The medallion reproduced above is evidence of the anger and consternation created in Germany by Lord Northcliffe's ruthless propaganda. *Obverse* :—Lord Northcliffe sharpening his pen ; ink-pot containing " propaganda ink." *Reverse* :—The Devil (the " Manufacturer of the Soul of the English people ") feeding the blazing globe with *The Times*, *Daily Mail*, and other organs of the Northcliffe Press.

The first idea of the military authorities was that the Press had ceased to exist with the declaration of war. Not a single correspondent was permitted with the Fleet or in the zone of the Armies, and the anxious public was expected to be satisfied with the cryptic and jejune communiqués accorded them from time to time by General Headquarters. These conventions were soon shaken by defeat. The zone of the armies became ragged at the edges. Facts and stragglers streamed backwards preceded and attended by clouds of rumour. Wounded arrived by the thousand from the front. The demand for knowledge of the events which were in progress became insistent.

In view of Lord Kitchener's well-known dislike of newspaper correspondents, I had suggested to him in September, 1914, the institution of an official " eye-witness " at General Headquarters. The eye-witness[1] plied his skilful pen ; but it might have been Mrs. Partington's broom against the flood of truth and rumour which rolled continuously back across the Channel. In the beginning of 1915 a few selected correspondents were as a great concession allowed with the Army.

Meanwhile the nature of the struggle and the inevitable mistakes, misfortunes and losses which scarred its path, affected the position of every leading and responsible actor—military, naval or political. The credit of Governments and Staffs, of Admiralty, War Office and Headquarters, tottered under the rude violence of the Teutonic attack. Ministers and Commanders, and not less those who aspired to fill their places, became conscious of an enormous latent power capable alike of enforcing action, of deflecting policy, of explaining disaster and of proclaiming success. And behind all lay the nation through whose united strength the war could alone be waged, ready to give all, but demanding knowledge and guidance. Thus after a brief but total eclipse, the sun of newspaper power began in the spring of 1915 to glow with unprecedented and ever-increasing heat.

[1] Lieut.-Col. now Maj.-Gen. Sir Ernest Swinton.

The Balance Destroyed.

In the old Party days when the whole British Press was regimented on one

side or the other, its function was healthy and its power modest. Each great Party had its organs, not only in the metropolis but in every city and town throughout the land. Liberal or Conservative politicians stood on firm ground. To be praised by Press supporters was almost as useful as to be abused by Press opponents. For every act of Government there were a thousand journalistic critics and another thousand champions. But critics and champions alike preached mainly to the converted, and gave to faithful Party followers the music they wished to hear. Blare and counter-blare cancelled each other, and policy could pursue its path with composure.

The national unity which sprang from the war destroyed this equilibrium. All were on one side and the enemy on the other. The whole force of the Press could be thrown against any Government, Minister or policy smitten by fortune. Errors, failures, shortcomings, inevitable when puny men were confronted with the giant torrent of events, found no defenders. The governing instrument was loaded at once with the extremes of support and opposition; and although almost unswerving loyalty to the national cause and universal desire to escape from mortal peril compelled a general restraint, the position of every leading figure became precarious in the highest degree.

Moreover, the truth could not be told; the case could not be argued. The Press, though its information flowed in through a thousand rills, possessed only a partial knowledge of the facts and operative causes as these were known to the Governments; and these Governments themselves only imperfectly apprehended the stupendous problem which they were attempting to solve. Half our mistakes and many of our misfortunes could have been avoided if the great issues of war policy and strategy could have been fought out across the floor of the House of Commons in the full light of day. But this was impossible while the enemy was the auditor of every discussion and the student of every published report or article. Debate followed by division, that last security of every Minister or Government, was precluded. Arguments were used which could not be refuted, though refutation was easy. Charges were made of which the disproof could not in the national interest be adduced; and the physical carnage of the trenches was accompanied by an odious confusion at home.

Politicians v. Generals.

A series of absurd conventions became established, perhaps inevitably, in the public mind. The first and most monstrous of these was that the Generals and Admirals were more competent to deal with the broad issues of the war than abler men in other spheres of life. The General no doubt was an expert on how to move his troops, and the Admiral upon how to fight his ships, though even in this restricted field the limitations of their scientific knowledge when confronted with unforeseen conditions and undreamed-of scales became immediately apparent. But outside this technical aspect they were helpless and misleading arbiters in problems in whose solution the aid of the statesman, the financier, the manufacturer, the inventor, the psychologist, was equally required.

The foolish doctrine was preached to the public through innumerable agencies that Generals and Admirals must be right on war matters, and civilians of all kinds must be wrong. These erroneous conceptions were inculcated billion-fold by the newspapers under the crudest forms.

The feeble or presumptious politician is portrayed cowering in his office, intent in the crash of the world on Party intrigues or personal glorification, fearful of responsibility, incapable of all save shallow phrase-making. To him enters the calm, noble, resolute figure of the great Commander by land or sea, resplendent in uniform, glittering with decorations, irradiated with the lustre of the hero, shod with the science and armed with the panoply of war. This stately figure, devoid of the slightest thought of self, offers his clear far-sighted guidance and

counsel for vehement action or artifice or wise delay. But his advice is rejected; his sound plans put aside; his courageous initiative baffled by political chatterboxes and incompetents. As well, it was suggested, might a great surgeon, about to operate with sure science and the study of a lifetime upon a desperate case, have his arm jogged or his hand impeded, or even his lancet snatched from him, by some agitated relation of the patient. Such was the picture presented to the public, and such was the mood which ruled. It was not however entirely in accordance with the facts; and facts, especially in war, are stubborn things.

Lord Northcliffe's Undue Power.

Although, as has been described, the Press played only a contributory part in the overturn of Mr. Asquith's Liberal Administration, its power was sensibly increased by the formation of the first Coalition Government. The British Commander-in-Chief had not scrupled to inform Lord Northcliffe of the shell shortage. Lord Northcliffe had not hesitated to publish the facts and to attack, not only the Prime Minister, but Lord Kitchener himself. The furious onslaughts of the Northcliffe Press had been accompanied by the collapse of the Administration.

To the minds of the public the two events presented themselves broadly as cause and effect. Henceforward Lord Northcliffe felt himself to be possessed of formidable power. Armed with the solemn prestige of *The Times* in one hand and the ubiquity of the *Daily Mail* in the other, he aspired to exercise a commanding influence upon events. The inherent instability and obvious infirmity of the first Coalition Government offered favourable conditions for the advancement of these claims. The recurring crises on the subject of conscription presented numerous occasions for their assertion. He was in intimate relation with some of the most powerful Ministers. General Headquarters, both under Sir John French and Sir Douglas Haig, treated him with deference. A spacious chateau—monument of their triumph—accommodated the once-banned War Correspondents, and the group of brilliant writers who represented the British Press were recognized and accepted as an indispensable part of the military machine.

There can be no doubt that Lord Northcliffe was at all times animated by an ardent patriotism and an intense desire to win the war. But he wielded power without official responsibility, enjoyed secret knowledge without the general view, and disturbed the fortunes of national leaders without being willing to bear their burdens. Thus a swaying force, uncertain, capricious, essentially personal, potent alike for good and evil, claiming to make or mar public men, to sustain or displace Commanders, to shape policies, and to fashion or overthrow Governments, introduced itself in the absence of all Parliamentary correctives into the conduct of the war.

Mr. Asquith's Imprudent Disdain.

No public man was more unaffectedly and consistently disdainful of this new development than Mr. Asquith. Relying on his control of the Liberal Party machine, he believed himself as independent of the Northcliffe Press during the war as Liberal Prime Ministers and Governments had been throughout the political struggles which preceded it. He disliked Lord Northcliffe, despised his activities, and ignored his influence. However majestic this attitude may have been, it did not take sufficient account of the realities of the time. The Liberal forces on which the Prime Minister was wont to rely had been gravely dissipated by the war. Parliament, the necessary counterpoise of the Press, was largely in abeyance. The platform was occupied solely by propaganda and recruiting. Public opinion was thus deprived of two out of the three great educative influences on which it depends in normal times. A policy of tireless detraction of certain Ministers and the ceaseless favouring of others, pursued month after month amid the convulsive episodes of war and the zealous passions

of the agonized nation, was bound eventually to produce results in action.

The Rejected Remedy.

In these circumstances a Dictator would have offered Lord Northcliffe the alternative of high and responsible office or honourable captivity until the conclusion of hostilities. Mr. Asquith was no Dictator, but even as a Constitutional Prime Minister he possessed two great and decisive means of self-defence. The first, suggested by Lord Rosebery, was the compulsory conversion of *The Times* by the Government into an official Monitor till the end of the war; the second was the Secret Session of the House of Commons. Both these measures would greatly have strengthened the hands of the Administration. The former would have afforded them a sure and authoritative means of guiding public opinion; the second would have bound them to the House of Commons in a comprehending and sympathetic unity.

Photo: Henri Manuel.

THE RT. HON. ANDREW BONAR LAW.

Born in New Brunswick in 1858 Bonar Law completed his education in Glasgow. Entering Parliament in 1900, after many years spent in business, Bonar Law was destined to become an outstanding figure in British political life. In 1916 he supported Mr. Lloyd George for the premiership, and when the Coalition Government fell in 1922, succeeded him as Prime Minister. The strain of the war years, grief at the loss in action of two gallant sons, and ill-health, combined to rob the nation of a trusted leader at the age of 65. He died in London in 1923.

On agreeing to take office in the first Coalition I pressed both these courses upon Mr. Asquith. He did not however adopt either. He took no steps to acquire *The Times*, and only once in his tenure did he resort most reluctantly and half-heartedly to the process of Secret Session. There remained therefore, as the reply to remorseless depreciation, only victory in the field. Victory would have carried all before it, but victory was unprocurable.

To the patriotic vagaries of Lord Northcliffe were added the Party vendettas of the *Morning Post*. This famous newspaper, though at that time possessing only a limited circulation, has played an appreciable part in the history of the last ten years. Written with extreme brilliancy, sincerely and consistently animated by Party spirit, this organ of the extreme Right persevered in its campaign of detraction, which never rested till it had contributed to driving successively from office every public man, Liberal or Conservative, not associated with its particular school of opinion.

* * *

The conscription crisis

of April, 1916, was however averted by further concessions on the part of Mr. Asquith. A new National Service Bill was passed, and Mr. Lloyd George remained in the Government.

Discontent of the Conservative Party— Mr. Bonar Law and Sir Edward Carson— A Crucial Division.

During the summer and autumn the Coalition Government had hung uneasily together, racked by many stresses and strains. In these circumstances Mr Bonar Law, the Leader of the Conservative Party, held the key position and was himself exposed to peculiar difficulties. Opposite to him in the House of Commons sat Sir Edward Carson, with a deeper personal hold in some respects upon the Conservative Party than its titular leader. As the pressure of the war grew, the discontent of the Conservatives with its conduct under a Liberal Prime Minister became steadily more serious, and all this dissatisfaction was focused and directed on the Government by Sir Edward Carson, who though himself at that time devoid of any administrative record seemed to typify the most vehement and uncompromising war policy in every sphere. Mr. Bonar Law, like Mr. Asquith, was essentially a Party man. After joining the Coalition he had declared that he would not continue to hold office in the Government if at any time a majority of the Conservative members of the House of Commons voted against it: he would not, that is to say, retain his position in virtue of Liberal votes. Thus the growth of support behind Sir Edward Carson clearly indicated an approaching change.

Photo: Howard Coster.

LORD BEAVERBROOK.

William Maxwell Aitken was born in New Brunswick in 1879. After a successful business career in Canada he settled in England in 1909, and in the following year became M.P. for Ashton-under-Lyne. He played an important part in the political crisis of 1916 which led to the fall of Mr. Asquith's Administration.

On November 8, Sir Edward Carson raised a debate on the seemingly trivial and irrelevant issue of the sale conditions of some small enemy properties in Nigeria. A resolution was moved declaring that "such properties and businesses should be sold only to natural-born British subjects or companies wholly British." The debate, which dealt chiefly with Nigerian palm kernels, was marked by the utmost acerbity. A large number of the most influential members of the Conservative party, including particularly the Protectionists, evinced a marked hostility to the Government. Mr. Bonar Law, as Colonial Secretary, was the Minister

directly concerned, and not even his position as a party leader saved him from marked expressions of displeasure renewed in speech after speech with a curious persistency.

Stung by this attack from his own friends and supporters, Mr. Bonar Law declared bluntly that the matter was one of direct confidence in the Government, and that Sir Edward Carson no doubt realized the seriousness of the course he was taking. Notwithstanding this, the dispute was pressed to a division in which only 73 Conservative Members voted for the Government out of a total of 286, while 65 flatly rejected the appeal of Mr. Bonar Law. This debate and division revealed a depth of hostility to Mr. Asquith's Administration in the Conservative ranks which could not be restrained by the presence of the Conservative leaders in the Cabinet. It was in consequence a danger-signal of the plainest kind.

But a complication had arisen. The consistent support which Mr. Bonar Law gave to the Prime Minister had brought him into differences on various occasions with Mr. Lloyd George, the most prominent member of the drastic war-policy group. These differences were exacerbated by the debate and division on Nigerian palm kernels. It happened that on that night Mr. Lloyd George and Sir Edward Carson were dining together, and by an accident Mr. Lloyd George was not in the House to support the Colonial Secretary when the division was taken. Thus the two principal personages whose common action was necessary to any decisive change in the Administration were for the time out of touch with each other.

The Potential Triumvirate.

The general misfortune in which the year 1916 closed produced feelings of disappointment and vexation in the Cabinet which overcame this personal misunderstanding. The failure to break the German line in the Somme battle in spite of the enormous losses incurred, the marvellous recovery of the Germanic powers in the east, the ruin of Roumania brought as it seemed so incontinently into the war, and the first beginnings of a renewed submarine warfare, strengthened and stimulated all those forces which insisted upon the need of still greater vigour in the conduct of affairs. Mr. Bonar Law became increasingly convinced as the rifts in the Cabinet deepened that Mr. Lloyd George's resignation would destroy the prospects of a successful conduct of the war. Forced to choose between Mr. Lloyd George and Mr. Asquith, he had no doubt where his duty lay.

Through the offices of Sir Max Aitken,[1] Mr. Bonar Law and Mr. Lloyd George came together in the closing days of November in a decision to secure a new and more effective instrument of war direction. The main principle uniting the two Ministers was that the existing Cabinet system whereby the executive heads of the various Departments, each with his special point of view, formed the supreme directing authority, was not adapted to the unprecedented peril of the times. In this view they were of course in full accord with Sir Edward Carson, and thus formed a potential Triumvirate.

But while these general bases of agreement were laid between the two Ministers, no specific method or occasion of bringing the issue to a head presented itself. There was general ferment and unrest in both the schools of policy into which the Government was divided, and an atmosphere of uncertainty and instability betokened the approaching storm. Early in December Mr. Lloyd George, then Secretary of State for War, formally raised the question of the withdrawal of the Prime Minister from the Presidency of the War Committee. He suggested that the political control of the Government and the task of directing the war could not be combined in the hands of a single man, however able or commanding. He proposed that the War Committee should be strengthened by the constant attendance of the Chiefs of the fighting services, that its presidency should be confided to another Minister whose name was not mentioned, but who could in the

[1] Now Lord Beaverbrook.

Photo: Lafayette.

THE RT. HON. DAVID LLOYD GEORGE.

To Lloyd George perhaps more than to any other statesman is credit due for the successful emergence of Great Britain from the dark years of 1914–18. In his conduct of affairs, first in connection with munitions and later as Prime Minister, he brought to his task determination and a driving force which proved irresistible. Born in 1863, in Manchester, and brought up in Wales, Lloyd George started life with few material advantages. Natural brilliance and a gift for oratory and debate brought him triumphantly through many stormy years. When the history of our time comes to be written, Lloyd George can hardly fail to be acclaimed as one of the greatest statesmen in the long story of the British people.

circumstances clearly be no other than himself; and that the Prime Minister should exercise a general supervision over affairs and retain the supreme political control.

Lloyd George Challenges Asquith.

This arrangement was at first not unfavourably entertained by Mr. Asquith. Indeed, if it is studied with attention, it will appear to have contained many features of great advantage to him. Viewing the issue from a detached standpoint, I reached the conclusion, as did Sir Edward Carson, that the position of the Secretary of State for War under it would become one both of difficulty and weakness. On him would fall all the brunt of battling with the naval and military Chiefs, afloat, in the field and at home—now restraining the Generals from their costly offensives, now stimulating the Admirals to make a greater and more aggressive contribution to the waging of the war. Acute differences were certain to develop in both directions between the political and the professional views. The appeal in all cases would have been to the Prime Minister who, free from the friction of the discussions of the War Committee, yet fully informed on every point, would have been able to decide with final authority. On the other hand, Mr. Lloyd George, publicly appointed to preside over the Committee actually directing the conduct of the war, would have been held responsible for every misfortune that occurred, and they were bound to be many.

I warned the Secretary of State for War, when he told me what was passing, of these obvious dangers, but he was determined to persist in his course. Friendly interviews with the Prime Minister led to an almost complete settlement. But at the last moment the personal antagonisms which had been latent in the Liberal section of the Cabinet asserted themselves. A leading article in *The Times*, erroneously attributed to Lord Northcliffe, led Mr. Asquith to consider the proposed arrangement derogatory to himself and to his position. He thereupon withdrew his provisional assent, and the Secretary of State for War resigned.

Lloyd George Prime Minister.

The resignation of Mr. Lloyd George led immediately to the fall of the Government. Mr. Bonar Law felt it would be impossible for him to remain in an Administration from which Mr. Lloyd George had resigned on the ground that the war direction was unsatisfactory. He and—after considerable heart-searchings—most of his friends therefore associated themselves with the Secretary of State for War. The intense passions which the distress and perplexity of the hour aroused on every side made all hope of accommodation impossible. On December 5, Mr. Asquith tendered to the King his resignation and that of his Ministry. Mr. Bonar Law, summoned by the Sovereign, advised that Mr. Lloyd George was the only possible successor. Every effort to induce Mr. Asquith to associate himself with the new Administration was made without success. Followed by all his Liberal colleagues, with the exception of Mr. Lloyd George, he retired into patriotic opposition, and the new Triumvirate of Mr. Lloyd George, Mr. Bonar Law and Sir Edward Carson assumed, with what were in practice dictatorial powers, the direction of affairs. These decisions were not challenged by Parliament, were accepted by the nation, and were acclaimed by the Press.

The new Prime Minister wished to include me in his Government; but this idea was received with extreme disfavour by important personages whose influence during this crisis was decisive. Lord Northcliffe was animated at this time by a violent hostility to me. He made haste to announce in *The Times* and the *Daily Mail* that it had been firmly resolved to exclude from office those who had been responsible for the failures of the war, and that the public would "learn with relief and satisfaction that Mr. Churchill would not be offered any post in the new Administration." He also endeavoured—though happily without success—to veto the appointment of Mr. Balfour as Foreign

Secretary. Four prominent Conservatives, judged indispensable to the new combination, signed or made a statement stipulating as a condition of taking office that neither I nor Lord Northcliffe should be Ministers. To this extent therefore—though perhaps in a manner scarcely complimentary to himself—Lord Northcliffe received a powerful reinforcement in his view.

It could certainly be adduced with validity that my conduct while First Lord was *sub judice* until the Dardanelles Commission had presented its report. Mr. Lloyd George was in no position in these circumstances to resist this oddly combined but formidable cabal. He therefore sent me a message a few days later, through a common friend, Lord Riddell, that he was determined to achieve his purpose, but that the adverse forces were too strong for the moment. I replied through the same channel with a verbal declaration of political independence.

My Exclusion.

I was of course bitterly disappointed at finding no sphere of action in a Ministry with whose aims and temper I was in the most complete accord. In time of peace political office is often a doubtful blessing, and a man is not seldom happier out than in. But in this World War a great official place, especially one connected with the fighting Services, was perhaps equal in scope to the command of an Army or even a group of armies; and loaded with my special knowledge and share in the whole series of events with which this story is concerned, I found a sentence of continued and indefinite inactivity almost unendurable. I realized however that the Parliamentary situation had been materially changed by the expulsion of Mr. Asquith and the official Liberal Party from the Government. The Opposition benches were now crowded with Members, patriotic and earnest for victory, but nevertheless filled with resentment at the summary manner in which their Leader and their Party had been treated. As a Privy Councillor I still had my seat on the front Opposition bench, with all the opportunities of intervention in debate which it confers on anyone, and which it confers in special measure on one who has no relations except those of personal courtesy with its other occupants.

My opportunity came in May. Feelings of anxiety and distrust boiled up against the new Government. It must be remembered that apart from Mr. Lloyd George's personal following, which might have amounted to one hundred, but was an uncertain quantity, the House of Commons still contained a Liberal, Labour and Irish Nationalist majority of nearly one hundred and fifty. The bulk were definitely hostile to him—for the most part not without reason.

A series of appreciable tremors heralded a phase of acute political tension. I therefore advised Mr. Lloyd George, as on a former occasion I had vainly advised Mr. Asquith, to hold a secret Session and take the House fully into the confidence of the Government. It was impossible in public debates, of which the enemy a few days later were readers, either for well-grounded criticisms to be expressed or for the Executive to lay even the outline of their case before the House. I was sure that the Government would emerge from a secret debate in an improved relation to the House as a whole. The absurd rumours and charges with which the Lobbies, the Clubs and the dinner-tables buzzed would be dissipated. Whatever the difficulties, whatever the mistakes, a Government which is sincerely trying its best and is swayed by no Party bias has everything to gain from the fullest statement of its case which the public interest renders possible.

The Secret Session.

I expressed these views to the Prime Minister through his Whip, Captain Guest, and learned a few days later that he had decided to accept them. A secret Session was announced for May 10. Mr. Asquith and the official Opposition had not asked for such a procedure. They maintained a neutral and a passive attitude in regard to it. It fell therefore to me to open the debate.

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

WOMEN RAILWAY WORKERS.

As more and more men left their customary occupations for service in the army their places were filled by women. For the first time in the nation's history women were given opportunity to display an adaptability perhaps unsuspected until that time.

The day came. The Members' and Strangers' Galleries were cleared, but every other part of the House was densely crowded with anxious Members. I was listened to for an hour and a quarter with strained attention, at first silently but gradually with a growing measure of acceptance and at length approval. At the end there was quite a demonstration. A summary of the argument will here serve the purpose of the general narrative.[1]

My Survey of the War.

"A new campaign is about to open. Since the beginning of the year two events have occurred, each of which has changed the whole situation and both of which must be taken into account in the policy of the Allies. The United States has entered the war, and Russia has collapsed. On the one hand, an Ally Empire whose standing Army comprised over seven million soldiers has been crushed by the German hammer. On the other, a nation comprising one hundred and twenty millions of the most active, educated and wealthy citizens, commanding intact and almost limitless resources of every kind, has engaged itself in our cause. But this nation is not ready. It has no large armies and no munitions. Its manhood is untrained to war. Its arsenals and factories, except in so far as they are engaged in producing munitions for the Allies, are unorganized. If time is given, nothing can stand against Great Britain and the United States together. If every Ally fails except these two, they could alone together carry the war against the Teutonic Empires to a victorious conclusion. But a long time will be needed—a time measured not by months but by years—before this mighty force can be brought to bear.

"There is one other factor besides time which is vital: Sea Communica-

[1] No record exists of this debate. But from my notes I can reconstruct the outline of the argument.

Imperial War Museum.

TRAM DRIVER AND CONDUCTOR.

This picture, taken in Scotland, of women tramway workers affords further proof of the versatility displayed by the thousands of willing helpers who carried out the jobs vacated by their menfolk.

tions. And in this sphere a third new situation of decisive consequence has also developed. When the Germans decided upon the unrestricted submarine campaign, they must have known that they would bring the United States into the war against them. Must they not also have believed that by this same means they would prevent her effective intervention? We do not know, we do not wish to know how many ships are being sunk each week by submarines. We know that the number and proportion is most serious and is still increasing. Here then is the fatal crux. Here then is the first and decisive danger to master. Let the whole energies of Britain be directed upon this point. Let the Navy make of it its great victory in the war. Let every resource and invention be applied. Let the anti-submarine war claim priority and dominance over every other form of British effort. Let us make sure that we can bring the American Armies to Europe as soon as they are fit to come.

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

LOCOMOTIVE-CLEANERS.

More arduous still were such tasks as the cleaning of a railway engine. This and a hundred and one other jobs of an equally heavy nature were faced daily by women in all parts of the country. But for their help, so bravely and cheerfully given, the nation's problems would have been greatly intensified.

"Meanwhile what should be our policy on land? Is it not obvious, from the primary factors which have been described, that we ought not to squander the remaining armies of France and Britain in precipitate offensives before the American power begins to be felt on the battlefields? We have not the numerical superiority necessary for such a successful offensive. We have no marked artillery preponderance over the enemy. We have not got the numbers of tanks which we need. We have not established superiority in the air. We have discovered neither the mechanical nor the tactical methods of piercing an indefinite succession of fortified lines defended by German troops. Shall we then in such circumstances cast away our remaining man power in desperate efforts on the Western Front before large American forces are marshalled in France? Let the House implore the Prime Minister to use the authority which he wields, and all his personal weight, to prevent the French and British High Commands from dragging each other into fresh bloody and disastrous adventures. Master the U-boat attack. Bring over the American millions. And meanwhile maintain an active defensive on the Western Front, so as to economize French and British lives, and so as to train, increase and perfect our armies and our methods for a decisive effort in a later year."

Photo: Cribb.

H.R.H. THE DUKE OF CONNAUGHT INSPECTS THE W.R.N.S.

The Women's Royal Naval Service was established by the Admiralty in 1917. Like the Women's Army Auxiliary Corps its members carried out a variety of duties in connection with their respective services upon which otherwise men would have been employed. Such necessary work as that of clerks, cooks and telephone operators, to mention only a few of the directions in which women could be useful, were carried out as part of their daily routine.

The Prime Minister replied after a short interval. He accepted in principle my general statement of the main factors. He expressed a great measure of agreement with the argument I had used. But he declined to commit himself against a renewed offensive. Indeed, he gave the impression that such a decision was beyond his power. (Alas, as we shall see, he was already deeply and personally committed.) He then proceeded to lead a captivated assembly over the whole scene of the war, gaining the sympathy and conviction of his hearers at every stage. When he sat down the position of the Government was stronger than it had been at any previous moment during his Administration.

Deepening Peril.

Shortly after his speech we met fortuitously behind the Speaker's chair. In his satisfaction at the course the debate had taken, he assured me of his determination to have me at his side. From that day, although holding no office, I became to a large extent his colleague. He repeatedly discussed with me every aspect of the war and many of his secret hopes and fears.

On the submarine war he was always undaunted. Week by week as April advanced the horrible curve of sinkings crept upwards. To me, then a spectator only, without the anodyne of constant grinding toil, it was torture. If this thin red line plotted on the blue squared paper mounted during May and June at the rate of April, very definite limits would be fixed to our power to continue the war. If it rose at the same or an increasing rate in July, August and September, a peace by negotiation, while enough time and

power remained, loomed upon the mind. The position of the British islands and Empire was such that effectual and final interruption of sea communications by any agency meant, not defeat, but destruction. Impotence, starvation, SUBJUGATION, stalked across the mental screen. At the worst of course we had many months of fighting time and strength before us. Had we enough time and enough strength to bring the American armies into France? The more one knew about the struggle, the more tormenting was the experience.

As the reader has perceived, these pages reveal, no doubt, my unceasing condemnation of the offensives in France in 1917; and I cannot acquit the Prime Minister of his responsibility for not having stopped them. But tragic and costly as were those episodes, they lay in a field of smaller proportions than the struggle with the U-boats. If there was no hope of victory in 1917 for the Allies on land, neither was there any reason to suppose they could themselves be overcome. The great combatants were too equally matched to be able to inflict mortal injury upon each other. Follies, slaughters, heartbreaks—these were the stakes. Ruin was not on the board in France. Her haunt was in the seas.

Lloyd George Undaunted.

And it was in facing with unquailing eye these awful contingencies during the opening months of his prime responsibility, that Mr. Lloyd George's greatest service to his countrymen will, I believe, be found by history to reside. Not only undaunted in the face of peril, but roused by each deepening manifestation to fresh energy, he drove the engine of State forward at increasing speed. The War Cabinet shared his burdens. If sometimes this loyal and capable group of men hampered him when he was right, they also furnished him with that environment of sound opinion and solid argument without which his own remarkable qualities of initiative could never have attained full power. They invested him also with a collective authority which rose high and dominating above the fierce pressures of the time.

The new Prime Minister possessed two characteristics which were in harmony with this period of convulsion. First, a power of living in the present, without taking short views. Every day for him was filled with the hope and the impulse of a fresh beginning. He

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

W.A.A.C.'s RECRUITING.

A war-time scene in Trafalgar Square in which members of the Women's Army Auxiliary Corps are supplying particulars of service to prospective recruits. The W.A.A.C.'s did great work in the war. They were numerically a strong body, totalling at the time of the Armistice some 41,000, of whom 17,000 had served overseas. Large detachments of this corps were to be found at all the bases in France, including Calais and Boulogne and other towns outside the fighting zone.

surveyed the problems of each morning with an eye unobstructed by preconceived opinions, past utterances, or previous disappointments and defeats. In times of peace such a mood is not always admirable, nor often successful for long. But in the intense crisis when the world was a kaleidoscope, when every month all the values and relations were changed by some prodigious event and its measureless reactions, this inexhaustible mental agility, guided by the main purpose of Victory, was a rare advantage. His intuition fitted the crisis better than the logical reasoning of more rigid minds.

His Qualities, Energy and Resolution.

The quality of living in the present and starting afresh each day led directly to a second and invaluable aptitude. Mr. Lloyd George in this period seemed to have a peculiar power of drawing from misfortune itself the means of future success. From the U-boat depredations he obtained the convoy system: out of the disaster of Caporetto he extracted the Supreme War Council: from the catastrophe of March 21 he drew the Unified Command and the immense American reinforcement.

His ascendancy in the high circles of British Government and in the councils of the Allies grew in the teeth of calamities. He did not sit waiting upon events to give a wiseacre judgment. He grappled with the giant events and strove to compel them, undismayed by mistakes and their consequences. Tradition and convention troubled him little. He never sought to erect some military or naval figure into a fetish behind whose reputation he could take refuge. The military and naval hierarchies were roughly handled and forced to adjust themselves to the imperious need.

Men of vigour and capacity from outside the Parliamentary sphere became the ministerial heads of great departments. He neglected nothing that he perceived. All parts of the task of Government claimed his attention and interest. He lived solely for his work and was never oppressed by it. He gave every decision when it was required. He scarcely ever seemed to bend under the burden. To his native adroitness in managing men and committees he now added a high sense of proportion in war policy and a power of delving to the root of unfamiliar things. Under his Administration both the Island and the Empire were effectually organized for war. He formed the Imperial War Cabinet which centred in a single executive the world-spread resources of the British Monarchy. The convoy system, which broke the U-boat attack at sea; the forward impulsion in Palestine, which overwhelmed the Turks, and the unified command which inaugurated the victories in France, belonged in their main stress and resolve as acts of policy to no one so much as to the First Minister of the Crown.

Photo: Sport & General.

W.A.A.C.'s IN TRAINING.

CHAPTER LXIV

GENERAL NIVELLE'S EXPERIMENT

Joffre's Plans for 1917—His Decline—A New Figure—The Final Scene—The Appointment of Nivelle—The Nivelle-Mangin Model—The Sudden and Violent Blow—Nivelle's Extensions of Joffre's Plans—Nivelle and Haig—Nivelle's Relations with the War Cabinet—Unified Command—Ludendorff Intervenes—*Alberich*—Nivelle's Repugnance to Facts—His Secret Memorandum Captured—Intense German Preparation—Fall of Briand's Government—Power and Opinions of Painlevé—French Misgivings—New Factors—Nivelle Inflexible—The Eve of Battle—The 16th of April—British Persistency—Lloyd George and the French Government—His Exhortations—The French Mutinies—Pétain's Achievement.

GENERAL JOFFRE'S plan for the campaign of 1917 was simple.

Joffre's Plans for 1917.

It was to be a continuation of the Battle of the Somme with only the shortest possible interlude during the extreme severity of the winter. The salient formed by the German line was to be crunched by convergent assaults of the British and the French. No time was to be lost in regrouping the armies; no delay was to be allowed for the arrival even of friendly reinforcements, or for the completion of the new artillery and munitions programmes of the Allies. February 1 was fixed for the opening of the new battle. All the British forces available for the offensive and the northern group of the French armies were to attack due east, the British from Vimy to Bapaume, the French between the Somme and the Oise; simultaneously another French army of the centre group was to strike northward from the direction of Rheims. Then, after all these armies had been in full battle for a fortnight and the Germans if not broken were thoroughly gripped, the Fifth French Army, supported by the Reserve group to which it belonged, was to strike in to decide the struggle or exploit the victory. Taken in an enormous purse, or as between gigantic pincers, the German armies, if their front gave way on any considerable scale, were to see themselves confronted first with the capture of very large numbers of men and enormous masses of material, and secondly with a rupture of the front so wide as to be irreparable.

Such were the proposals which the French Generalissimo laid before the Allied Statesmen and Commanders at a Conference at Chantilly on November 16, 1916, and which he expounded with precision in his Instruction of November 27.

"I have decided to seek the rupture of the enemy's forces by a general offensive executed between the Somme and the Oise at the same time as the British Armies carry out a similar operation between Bapaume and Vimy. This offensive will be in readiness for the 1st February, 1917, the exact date being fixed in accordance with the general military situation of the Allies."

As will be seen as the account progresses, the launching of these tremendous operations from the beginning and during the whole of February would have caught the Germans at a moment exceedingly unfavourable to them. Here perhaps at last, after so many regrettable misadventures and miscalculations, Joffre might have won unchallenged laurels. But these possibilities remain in the mists of the unknown; for at this very moment Joffre was removed from his command, and the supreme direction passed to another hand.

His Decline.

Although the fame of Verdun and the Somme had been valiantly trumpeted by Press and propaganda to the uttermost ends of the earth, instructed opinion in Paris was under no illusions about either battle. The glory of Verdun belonged to the French soldiers, who under Castelnau, Pétain, Nivelle and Mangin had sustained the honour of France. The neglect and inadequacy of its defences was clearly traceable to the Commander-in-Chief. His astonishing correspondence with Galliéni in December, 1915, had already been read in secret session to the Chamber in July; and although Briand had sustained the Commander-in-Chief, he had clearly intimated that his retention of the command must be reviewed at a more propitious season. To remove him while the Battle of Verdun was at its height, when the offensive he had concerted with the British on the Somme had just begun, and before that battle and the hopes involved in it had reached their conclusion, could not, he had urged, be in accordance with the interests of France. But the Battle of the Somme was now over. Its last engagement had been fought, and, for all the heroism and sacrifice of the soldiers, fought without decisive gains. The German line, sorely pressed, had nevertheless been maintained unbroken.

Photo: L.N.A.

AUSTRALIAN TROOPS ENTER BAPAUME.

On the morning of March 17, 1917, patrols reported the German withdrawal from Bapaume. Very soon afterwards parties of Australians made their way into the town, which it was soon obvious had been systematically pillaged. The Germans subjected Bapaume to heavy shelling and, as this photograph shows, the houses were wrecked or on fire.

Photo: Newspaper Illustrations.

IN RUINED PÉRONNE.

One day later, on Sunday, March 18, 1917, Péronne was entered by British troops. As in the case of Bapaume, the houses were wrecked, and little but splintered timber and fallen masonry remained. Like Bapaume, Péronne was retaken by the Germans in 1918, and again changed hands in the final allied offensive of 1918.

Nay, some of the troops[1] to invade Roumania had actually been drawn from the Western Front. Roumania had been destroyed and the German prestige re-established as the year, so terrible in its slaughters, drew to a crimson close. Now was a time of reckoning.

Now also for the first time Briand considered himself to have discovered a fitting and suitable successor to Joffre. The three great Chiefs of the French Army, the war horses of the fighting front, Commanders of armies or groups of armies since the beginning of the war —Foch, Castelnau, Pétain—were all for reasons which seemed sufficient at the time ruled out. Of Castelnau it was

[1]The Alpine Corps and the 187th Brigade.

said by the Socialist left that he was too religious. Of Pétain it was complained that he was not sufficiently gracious to members of the Parliamentary Commissions and other persons of distinction who visited his headquarters. And it was stated that General Sarrail, speaking to Clémenceau in August, 1915, had said of him, "Il n'est pas des notres" (He's not one of us), to which that grand old man had replied, "What do I care for that, if he can win us a victory?" But Clémenceau's day had not yet dawned, and the Sarrail suggestion festered wherever it had reached. Of Foch a keen propaganda, widespread but untraceable, had said "His health is broken; his temper and his nerves have given way. He is finished." So much for Castelnau, Pétain and Foch.

A New Figure.

But now a new figure had appeared. Nivelle had conducted the later battle of Verdun both with vigour and success, and under his orders Mangin had recovered the famous Fort of Douaumont. In the mood of the hour Joffre had already selected Nivelle to replace Foch. Forthwith a stream of celebrities took the road to Verdun and made for the first time the acquaintance of the new Army Commander. They found themselves in the presence of an officer whose modesty, whose personality, whose lucidity of expression, exercised an almost universal charm. A stream of glowing and delighted accounts flowed towards Paris. There can be no doubt of the attraction exercised by General Nivelle over the many experienced men of affairs with whom he came in contact. Briand, his Ministers, the delegations from the Chamber, were as swiftly impressed as Lloyd George and the British War Cabinet a few months later. Add to these pleasing impressions the glamour of unquestioned and newly won military achievement, and the elements of an alternative Commander-in-Chief were not in that weary moment lacking.

The Final Scene.

On December 27 Joffre was promoted Marshal of France and relieved of his command. A pleasing and pathetic personal light is thrown on the closing scene by Pierrefeu's skilful pen. No one has been a more stern or more instructed critic of General Joffre. His searching studies, made with the fullest knowledge of events and first-hand observation, have been more fatal to the Joffre legend than all the other attacks and exposures which have appeared in France. But Pierrefeu lights his severe pictures with many a deft and human touch. He has described the curious spectacle of Joffre's life at Chantilly during these two tremendous years. "This office without maps;" "this table without papers;" the long hours passed by the Commander-in-Chief in reading and in answering tributes of admiration received from all over the world; his comfortable and placid routine; his air of leisure and serenity; his excellent appetite and regular customs; his long full nights of unbroken repose far from the crash of the cruel cannonade, "cette vie de bon rentier au plus fort de la guerre." He tells us of Joffre's habit when in difficulties with the enemy or with his Government, of patting his massive head with his hand and ejaculating with a droll air, "Pauvre Joffre." He tells us of his little aide-de-camp, Captain Thouzelier; so familiar a figure during all this period, flitting to and fro among the bureaus of the Grand Quartier Général, everywhere known as "Tou Tou." And how in moments of good humour and as a special compliment Joffre would address him as "Sacré Thouzelier." It is from such details that an impression is obtained of real historic value. But the picture is now to fade and vanish for ever.

"The new Marshal assembled at the Villa Poiret his principal officers to bid them his adieux: the ceremony was sad. All these men were painfully affected at the idea of separation from the illustrious man who had directed them for so long. Each bore in his breast the anxiety for a future which seemed sombre. The Marshal, who by his rank had the right to three orderly officers, asked who among those present wished to accompany him in his retirement.

Alone the Commandant Thouzelier lifted spontaneously his hand. As the Marshal seemed astonished, General Gamelin said to him softly, 'Don't bear a grudge to those who have their career to make.' And certainly Joffre never bore any such grudge. When all the company had gone, the Marshal cast a final glance at the house which had nursed so much glory. Then with a smile and giving a friendly tap to his faithful Thouzelier, passing his hand across his head, he uttered his favourite expression, 'Pauvre Joffre — Sacré Thouzelier.'"[1]

The Appointment of Nivelle.

The appointment of General Nivelle was clearly a very questionable proceeding. There are enormous dangers in selecting for the command of the National Army or Fleet some comparatively junior officer, however well supported by subordinate achievement. To supersede not only Joffre, but Foch, Castelnau, Pétain, by a General like Nivelle, who had only commanded a single army for five months, was a step which could only be vindicated by extraordinary results. Happier would it have been for General Nivelle had he been left to make his way step by step in the high circles of command to which his good conduct and substantial qualities had won him admission.

Meanwhile the French Staff in the dusk of Joffre had formed new conceptions on tactics. The principle that "the artillery conquers the ground and the infantry occupies it," which had played a comforting, if somewhat barren, part in 1915 and 1916, was to a large extent discarded in favour of greater audacity. The Nivelle-Mangin exploit on October 24 at Verdun had tended to become the model of the French Staff. It was the foundation, not only of General Nivelle's fame, but of his convictions. It comprised the whole of his message. He believed that he and his principal officers had found a sure, swift method of rupturing the German defence. He believed further that his method was capable of application on the largest possible scale. Multiply the scale of such an attack ten or fifteen times, and the resultant advantages would be multiplied in an even greater proportion. Just as Falkenhayn in his scheme of attack on Verdun had always in his mind the victory of Gorlice-Tarnow, so Nivelle a year later founded his hopes and reasoning upon his achievement at Douaumont.

The Nivelle-Mangin Model.

No one will undervalue the tactics which gained success on October 24. They were hammered out by fighting Generals amidst the fiercest fires. However, it does not follow in war or in some other spheres that methods which work well on a small scale will work well on a great scale. As military operations become larger, they become more ponderous, and the time factor begins to set up complex reactions. Where days of preparation had sufficed, months may be required. Secrets that can be kept for days are apt to wear out in months. Surprise, the key to victory, becomes harder to secure with every additional man and gun. There were in the Nivelle-Mangin methods and in the spirit which animated them the elements of decisive success. But their authors had not learned to apply them on the gigantic scale with which they were now to be concerned: nor in the year 1917 did they possess the necessary superiority of force in its various forms. It was reserved for Ludendorff, on March 21, 1918, to execute what Nivelle had conceived, to combine audacity of action with a true sense of values, to make long preparations without prematurely losing secrecy, and to effect a strategic surprise on a front of fifty divisions. But this comparison cannot even be suggested without numerous reservations arising from the different circumstances.

Nivelle became Commander-in-Chief on December 12. He arrived at Chantilly on the 16th; and on that same date there issued from the French High Command a Memorandum on the new (Verdun) methods of the offensive which had no doubt been drawn up during the preceding month while Joffre still ruled, to greet the advent of the new

[1] Pierrefeu: G.Q.G., Section I.

Photo: Newspaper Illustrations.

REMAINS OF A GERMAN TRAIN: CLÉRY.

The shooting of the Royal Artillery, including all the batteries raised specially for the war, became increasingly accurate as the months passed. Here are the remains of a German store train caught by British gunners at Cléry Station, near Péronne, in March, 1917.

Chief. General Nivelle lost no time in developing this theme in his own words. On December 21, in a letter to Sir Douglas Haig and in instructions to his own groups of armies, he wrote:

The Sudden and Violent Blow.

"The objective which the Franco-British armies should seek, is the destruction of the principal mass of the enemy. This result can only be attained as the consequence of a decisive battle" . . .[1]

On the 24th, in a further Note to his Army Group Commanders, communicated to the British Staff, he affirmed:

"That the rupture of the front (penetration to the rear of the mass of the hostile batteries) is possible on condition it is made at a single stroke by a sudden attack in 24 or 48 hours."[2]

And on January 29 to General Micheler whom he had placed in command of the three armies destined for the main attack, he emphasized "the character of violence, of brutality, and of rapidity which should close the offensive, and in particular its first phase, the break-through."

These quotations are typical of a continued flow of instructions and exhortations which General Nivelle, his Verdun Confraternity, and the French Headquarter Staff dutifully toiling behind them, lavished week after week upon their armies and their Allies.

The reader will remember Colonel de Grandmaison, the Director of Operations of the years before the war, the Apostle of the Offensive, immediately, every time—"*à outrance, à la baionette,*" etc. War has claimed her Priest. The body of Colonel de Grandmaison lies mouldering in the grave—a grave, let no one fail to declare, guarded by the reputation of a brave gentleman eager to give his life for his country and his theories. He has fallen; but his theme has found a fleeting resting-place in the bosom of Colonel d'Alenson, Chief of the Staff of General Nivelle. Pierrefeu gives a vivid description of this officer who flitted so suddenly, so swiftly, and so tragically across the scene. Immensely tall and thin, dark, sallow, cadaverous, silent, sombre, full of suppressed fire—a man absorbed in his convictions and ideas. The astonishing rocket rise of Nivelle had carried d'Alenson as an attendant star to the military zenith. But there is this fact about him which

[1] "Le but que les armées franco-britanniques doivent atteindre, est la destruction de la masse principale des forces ennemies. Ce résultat ne peut être obtenu qu'à la suite d'une bataille décisive."

[2] "Que la rupture de front (pénétration jusqu'en arrière du gros des batteries ennemies) est possible, à condition de se faire d'un seul coup par attaque brusquée en 24 ou 48 heures."

should be noted—he had but one year to live, and consequently but one coup to play. Gripped in the closing stages of consumption, he knew that his time was short. Still, short as it was, there was a deed to do which might win enduring honour. Such a personal situation is not favourable to the practical common sense and judgment peculiarly required in a Chief of Staff.

Nivelle's Extensions of Joffre's Plans.

Fortune had no sooner hoisted General Nivelle to the topmost summit of power than she deserted him. From the moment of his assuming command of the French armies everything went against him. He was from the outset more successful in exciting the enthusiasm of the political than of the military leaders: and he was more successful with the British Government even than with his own. He proceeded immediately to extend the scope of the immense operations which had been contemplated by Joffre. In his general offensive against the German salient Joffre had been careful to avoid the formidable span of thirty kilometres from Soissons to Craonne along the Aisne so well known to the British in 1914. General Nivelle ordered an additional offensive to be mounted against this front, and another further to the east at Moronvillers. Joffre had planned to attack at the earliest moment, even if it involved the sacrifice of some degree of preparation. Not only must Nivelle's scale be larger, but his preparations must be more detailed and complete; and for all this he was willing to pay in terms of time. Whereas the French Staff under Joffre had defined his aim as "la recherche de la rupture du dispositif

Photo: Illustrations Bureau.

THE FRENCH RECAPTURE NOYON.

Noyon, a town on the Oise, some sixty miles from Paris, was retaken by the French in March, 1917. The proximity of Noyon to the capital led M. Clémenceau, when disposed to be critical, to remind his hearers of the seriousness of the situation by saying, "The Germans are still at Noyon." Before leaving Noyon the Germans removed fifty young girls between the ages of sixteen and twenty-five, and twelve young men as hostages.

ennemi," Nivelle claimed nothing less than " la destruction de la masse principale des armées ennemies." Whereas Joffre had contemplated a revival of the Somme battle on a still larger scale and under more favourable conditions, with three or four tremendous attacks engaging successively over a period of weeks the front and resources of the Germans, Nivelle proclaimed the doctrine of a sudden general onslaught culminating in victory or defeat within twenty-four, or at the most forty-eight hours. And whereas Joffre would have struck early in February, Nivelle's extensions involved delay till April. The effect of the Nivelle alterations upon the Joffre plan was to make it larger, more violent, more critical, and much later.

Nivelle and Haig.

On December 20, Nivelle explained his ideas to Sir Douglas Haig and invited him to recast the previous plans and extend the British right from Bouchavesnes to the road from Amiens to Roye. These discussions—not to say disputes—between the French and British Headquarters upon the share which each should assume upon the front were continuous throughout the war. All followed the same course; the French dwelt on the number of kilometres they guarded, the British on the number of German divisions by which they were confronted, and each reinforced these potent considerations by reminding their Ally that they were about to deliver or sustain a major offensive. On this occasion, however, Haig was not unwilling to meet the wishes of the French Command. He was in favour of renewing the offensive in France and was ready to fall in with Nivelle's views as to its direction and scope. Moreover, when the French wished to assume the brunt of

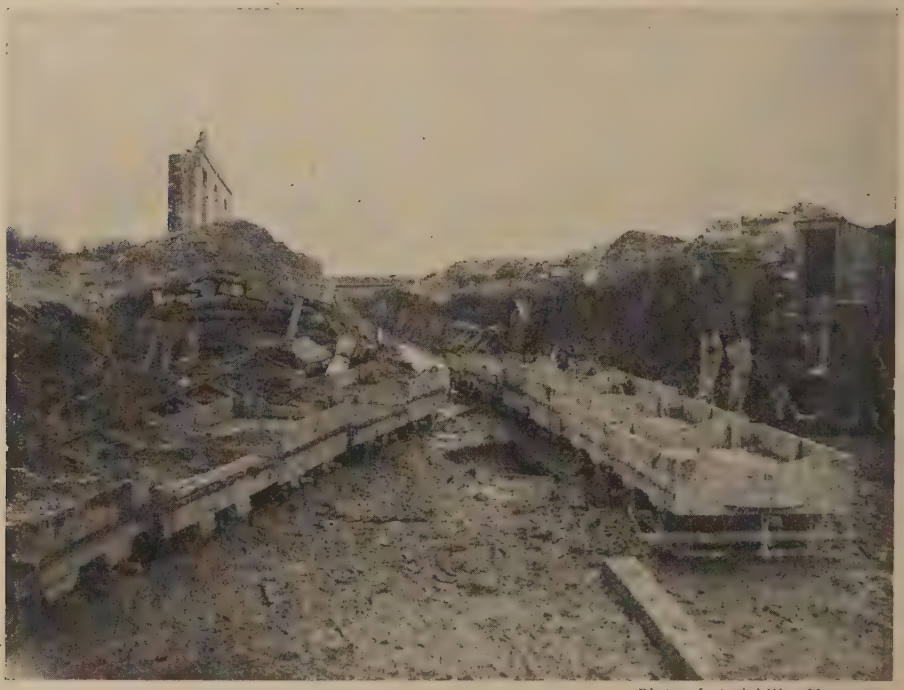


Photo: Imperial War Museum.

PREPARATIONS FOR THE BATTLE OF ARRAS.

Trench railway and tracks at " Oxford Circus," on the outskirts of Arras, April, 1917. The Third Battle of Arras opened on Easter Monday, April 9, 1917, and resulted in the capture of the Vimy Ridge together with some 3,000 yards of the Hindenburg Line. The attempt upon Quéant, one of the objectives, failed.

Photo: Copyright.

ARRAS, 1917: ZERO HOUR, 5.30 a.m.

The opening phase of the Third Battle of Arras. The minute hands of scores of watches have reached zero hour, 5.30 a.m., on the morning of April 9, 1917, and the infantry are about to clamber out of their trenches.

Photo: Associated Illustration Agencies.

AT THE ENTRANCE TO A DUG-OUT.

A German machine-gun crew bringing up their own gun from the dug-out which had given them shelter. Unlike the Somme, where machine-guns were, in the majority of cases, brought out and sited in time to take toll of the attacking British, the Germans lost heavily at the Arras battle in both men and material.

the new attack and asked for assistance for this purpose, it was hardly for the British to refuse. On December 25 therefore Haig wrote to Nivelle, "I agree in principle with your proposals and am desirous of doing all I can to help you on the lines you suggest." He also undertook to extend the British front from February 1 as far as the Amiens-St. Quentin Road. Both Haig and the British Headquarters were however extremely sceptical of the power of the French Army to carry out the part assigned to it in the ambitious programme of General Nivelle. They were further greatly preoccupied by the condition of the Nord Railway which, as maintained by the French, was at this time quite inadequate to sustain the important operations expected of the British Army. They therefore pressed for the improvement of their communications and declared themselves unable to fix a date for the British offensive while this extremely practical point remained unsettled.

Nivelle's Relations with the War Cabinet.

In the course of these discussions the first hint of the proposed renewal of the offensive and of its changed form was conveyed to the British War Cabinet on December 26. Monsieur Ribot, who had come to London, stated that the new French Commander had an idea of breaking through on a wide front, keeping in reserve an army of manœuvre to carry on the attack after the line had been broken. For this to be achieved the British Army must add 30 or 40 kilometres to their present line. Mr. Lloyd George was at first adverse to the renewal of the offensive in France and especially to the renewal of a long offensive like the Somme. In all our talks before he had become Prime Minister I had found him in sympathy with my general views on this subject. His first effort on obtaining power was to find some alternative. At the Rome Conference which he attended at the beginning of January he developed the proposal for a heavy attack on the Austrian front, mainly by Italian troops supported by an enormous concentration of Anglo-French batteries. The French, under the Nivelle influence, opposed this plan. Sir William Robertson gave it no support and it was merely remitted to the Staffs to study. As the train bringing the Prime Minister home from Italy waited at the Gare du Nord, General Nivelle presented himself and unfolded his scheme in outline. The first impressions on both sides were favourable. Nivelle was invited to London and met the War Cabinet on January 15. His success was immediate. The British Ministers had never before met in Council a general who could express himself in forceful and continuous argument, and they had never before met a French general whom they could understand. Nivelle not only spoke lucidly, he spoke English. He had not only captured Fort Douaumont, but had an English mother. He explained that his method involved no resumption of the prolonged Somme battles, but one short, sharp, decisive rupture. Mr. Lloyd George's resistance to the new offensive plan had been melting rapidly since the meeting at the Gare du Nord. It was soon to transform itself into ardent support. Haig was also in London; he and Robertson were summoned to the Council, and a Memorandum was drawn up and signed by all three Generals formally approving a renewed offensive on the Western Front to begin not later than April 1, with consequential preliminary extensions of the British Front.

Unified Command.

So far all had been harmonious, but the Prime Minister in the process of being converted from his previous opposition to the offensive had evolved a further design. He was already set upon his great and simple conception of a united command. Like the War Cabinet he was attracted by the personality of General Nivelle and disposed to back him—if at all—whole-heartedly. It was believed that better war direction could be obtained from the French. It was also believed—and in this case with far more justification—that one single controlling hand ought to prevail on the whole of the Western Front. "It is not," as Lloyd George said when later

in the war he had gained his point, " that one General is better than another, but that one General is better than two." So Nivelle returned to Chantilly carrying the virtual promise of the Prime Minister that Haig and the British Army should be subordinated to his directions. These important additional developments were not at this stage imparted by the Prime Minister or the War Cabinet to either Robertson or Haig.

During January the inadequacy of the rolling stock on the Nord Railway became so marked that after strenuous British protests another conference was convened at Calais on February 26. The French then produced a detailed scheme of organization for an allied G.H.Q. in France. This provided for a French Generalissimo with a Headquarters Staff of French and British officers under a British Chief of Staff. A British Commander-in-Chief was to be retained in name for Adjutant-General's work, but without influence upon operations. The immediate resistance of the British Generals led to this proposal being put aside, and instead an agreement was drawn up placing the control of the forthcoming operations solely in Nivelle's hands and the British Army under his orders for that period. To this Haig and Robertson—lest worse should befall—agreed.

The episode—in itself remarkable—had sensibly impaired the relations between the British and French Headquarters. It seemed to the British High Command that Nivelle had been concerned in an attempt with their own Government to procure their subordination to himself, if not indeed their supersession. From the outset they had viewed the appointment of the new Commander-in-Chief over the heads of all the best-known French soldiers with some surprise. Now mistrust and resentment were added. When on the strength of his new authority Nivelle sent instructions to Haig, couched in a tone of command, directing him to give up the long-planned British attack upon the Vimy Ridge in favour of the operations further to the south of Arras, Haig refused to comply. He applied to the British Government and " requested to be told whether the War Cabinet wished the Commander-in-Chief of the British Expeditionary Force should be subject to such treatment by a junior foreign commander." The strain was sharp. A compromise was eventually reached, but the friendly and intimate co-operation which had existed for so long between the British and French Staffs had undergone a noticeable decline, and Nivelle was criticized in French high military circles for having provoked this unfavourable result.

Ludendorff Intervenes—*Alberich*.

At this moment an unexpected event occurred. Ludendorff intervened, and the Germans acted. The great military personality which Germany had discovered in her need, armed in the panoply and under the ægis of Hindenburg, by one sure stroke overturned all the strategy of General Nivelle. Towards the end of February the German evacuation of the whole sector from Arras to Noyon began. Leaving a screen of troops to occupy the abandoned positions and fire off their guns and rifles, the German Army withdrew fifty miles from the threatened area of the salient, and with unhurried deliberation assumed their new deeply considered positions on what was henceforward to be known as the Hindenburg line. The German General Staff called this long prepared operation by the code name *Alberich*, after the malicious dwarf of the Nibelungen legend. They left their opponents in the crater fields of the Somme, and with a severity barbarous because far in excess of any military requirements, laid waste with axe and fire the regions which they had surrendered.

The retrograde movement, rumoured for some days, was first detected on the front of the British Fifth Army. On February 24 suspicion was aroused by the German artillery shelling its own trench lines. British patrols found the hostile trenches empty. The Fifth Army Operations Order of that same night said " The enemy is believed to be

Photo : Imperial War Museum.

ANTI-AIRCRAFT GUN.

A 13-pdr. 9 cwt. anti-aircraft gun mounted on a Thornycroft lorry. This photograph, taken at Fricourt in 1916, shows the gun about to go into action. A hostile plane is approaching, and the range is being taken prior to opening fire. The essential features of a gun for anti-aircraft work include all-round traverse and a high angle of fire. The rate of fire was at that time as high as twenty-five rounds a minute.

withdrawing." Immense clouds of smoke and the glare of incendiary fires by night proclaimed the merciless departure of the enemy. On the 25th he was reported to be retiring on a front of 18,000 yards, and on February 28 the British Intelligence spoke of a retirement to the Hindenburg line.

However absorbed a Commander may be in the elaboration of his own thoughts, it is necessary sometimes to take the enemy into consideration. Joffre's plan had been to bite the great German salient in February; and whether it would have succeeded or not, no man can tell. The Nivelle plan was to bite it with still larger forces in April. But by March the salient had ceased to exist. Three out of Nivelle's five armies, which were to have been employed in the assault, were now separated by a gulf of devastated territory from their objective. All their railroads, all their roads, all their magazines were so far removed from the enemy's positions that at least two months would be required to drag them forward into a new connection with the war. The remaining two armies were left with no other possibility before them than to deliver disconnected frontal attacks on the strongest parts of the old German line.

In these circumstances Nivelle's *Directive* to the British armies under his control is of great interest.

G.Q.G.
March 6, 1917.

Direction for the Marshal.

The retirement of the enemy on the front of the Fifth British Army constitutes a new fact, the repercussion of which upon the joint offensive of the Franco-British Armies must be examined.

So far the retreat of the Germans has only been carried out on the front of the Fifth British Army. It will perhaps be extended to the region of the Somme and the Oise. But in any case there is no indication which would allow us to suppose that the enemy will act similarly on the front of attack of your Third and First Armies, any more than on that of the G.A.R. (Reserve Group). On the contrary, the so-called Hindenburg position is so disposed that the directions of our principal attacks, both in the British and the French zones, are such that they will outflank it and take it in reverse.

In this respect the German retirement may be entirely to our advantage, even if it becomes general; and on this assumption I base a first decision, which is *not to modify in any fundamental way the general plan of operations already settled,*[1] and in particular to stick to the date fixed for the launching of our attacks.

It must, however, be admitted that all our operations cannot be carried out in the way arranged, and I will therefore examine in succession the attitude to be adopted on the front of the British Armies and of the G.A.N. (Northern Group).

Nivelle's Repugnance to Facts.

Distance, numbers, direction—all were changed. Yet it was decreed that the principle was unaffected and that the enterprise should proceed.

We have seen the tactical characteristics of the Joffre plan as developed by General Nivelle; the gigantic scale of the attack, its convergence upon the German salient; the minute study of detail and its comprehension by all ranks; and lastly, most precious and vital of all, the brutal, violent explosions of surprise. Of these four conditions, the scale had been reduced by half, and the convergence practically prevented by the German retreat. The other two—detail and surprise—were destined to destroy one another.

The progress of the immense preparations on those parts of the British and French fronts still in offensive relation to the enemy was continually visible from the air. From the south of Arras to the south of Soissons along a front of nearly 150 kilometres the Germans knew that since their retirement they could not be attacked. The 20-kilometres sector before Arras and perhaps a hundred kilometres in Champagne remained the only dangerous fronts. On these fronts they could watch each day

[1] My italics.

Photo : Alfieri.

GOING UP TO THE LINE.

The spring of 1917 was wet and the men in France suffered accordingly. The picture reproduced above of bedraggled troops on their way to the front line was taken during a momentary halt on a congested road. The state of the road surface and of the men, most of whom are laden like pack mules, illustrates some of the minor discomforts with which the infantry had to contend.

the gathering of the storm. Good intelligence and aerial observation enabled the slight uncertainty as to where the main thrusts of the attack would take place to be reduced still further. But information of far greater precision and certainty was soon to be placed at their disposal.

His Secret Memorandum Captured.

In his desire that all ranks should comprehend the spirit of his plan, and that battalion commanders and even company commanders should know its whole scope, General Nivelle had caused various documents of high consequence to be circulated among the troops in the line. The first of these was the famous Staff memorandum on the new principles of the offensive dated December 16 which has already been referred to. The imprudence of allowing such a document to pass into the hands of troops holding the line often at even less than 100 yards from the enemy was swiftly punished. On March 3 a raid by a German division of the Crown Prince's army captured this fateful document. "This memorandum," writes the Crown Prince,[1] "contained matter of extraordinary value, it made clear that this time there was to be no question of limited attack but a break-through offensive on a grand scale was contemplated. . . . The memorandum also made disclosures above all as to the particular nature of the surprise which the attacker had in view. This was based on the fact alleged to have been observed on our side that our defensive artillery as a rule made only a weak reply to the artillery preparation which preceded the attack. The French therefore thought to avoid protracted digging of earthworks for the attacking troops, particularly for the artillery. . . . Graf Von Schulenberg . . . at once formulated the logical reply

[1] *My War Experiences.*

for the defence, the artillery preparation not only to be powerfully returned, but even beforehand all recognized enemy preparations for attack to be overwhelmed by concentrated artillery fire. We ventured to hope that the surprise might in this way be most effectively met and the sting taken out of the first attack, which experience had shown to be the strongest and best prepared."

All through the month of March, General Nivelle's preparations for surprise continued to rivet the attention of the enemy. "By April," writes the Crown Prince, "a great deal of information already obtained led to the conclusion that the main attack was to be expected before long against the south front of the Seventh and Third Armies west of the Argonne. The Intelligence Service further confirmed the impression left by the French attack memorandum which had been captured. . . . Great depths of artillery, enormous supplies of ammunition, innumerable battery positions directly before the enemy's first line, no strong fortifications of battery positions, simply cover from the enemy's view, complete cessation of hostilities." . . . Again, "On April 6 a clever attack by the 10th Reserve Division at Sapigneul brought us into possession of an order of attack of the French Fifth Army. In it the French attacking units were mentioned by name. The Fifth Army's objective was the line Prouvais-Proviseux - Aumenancourt. The Brimont [position] was to be taken by an enveloping movement from the north. Fresh information upon the anticipated French method of attack was given. The last veil concealing the intention of the French offensive was torn aside."

Intense German Preparation.

All this time the Germans, spurred and assisted by the most perfect information, were preparing their defences. The army commands were reorganized. In February, when Nivelle's preparations first began to be obvious, the Crown Prince's command was extended eastwards to include the Seventh Army

Photo: Central News.

CANADIAN MACHINE-GUNNERS AT VIMY.

Taken during the attack on the Vimy Ridge which resulted in one of the most important gains achieved on the Western Front up to that date. The Canadian machine-gunners made clever use of cover during the advance and were able to give valuable support to the attacking infantry.

(of Prince Rupprecht's group), thus unifying the control of the entire front to be attacked. In March a whole additional army—the First—was interpolated between the Seventh and the Third. The Crown Prince's Headquarters were moved from Stenay to Charleville. Throughout March the reinforcement of his group of armies was unceasing. Machine guns, artillery, battle-planes, intelligence service and labour battalions flowed in a broad stream to the threatened front. The relief gained by the Germans in the shortening of their line through their retirement from the salient enabled ever larger forces to be concentrated opposite the impending French attack. Night and day by ceaseless German toil the fortification of the whole area proceeded vehemently. Their position from Soissons to Rheims and beyond Rheims was by nature perhaps the strongest sector of the enemy's front. The Craonne plateau, the long hog's-back of the Chemin des Dames, the wooded bluffs and ridges of the Argonne were all developed by ardent toil into one homogeneous labyrinth of trenches and tunnels, crowded with battalions and machine guns and swathed in tangles of barbed wire. At the beginning of the year eight or nine German divisions had stood upon this front; by the time Nivelle had perfected his plan of surprise forty, a number scarcely inferior to the attack, were waiting to receive him.

Fall of Briand's Government.

Other preoccupations began to gather round Nivelle. He had been the choice of a French Government whose reputation and existence were largely bound up with his. In Briand, the Premier, and in Lyautey, the Minister of War, he had sponsors who could by no means separate themselves from him. No Government could afford to change their mind about a Commander they had violently elevated above all the recognized chiefs of the profession. But now suddenly this sure support was to fail. Early in March, General Lyautey became entangled in the Parliamentary meshes. He precipitately resigned, and in his fall dragged down Briand and the whole Government. New rulers ascended the tribune of power, with whom Nivelle had no associations but those of hostility. Under a Ribot Administration Painlevé became Minister of War.

Paul Painlevé was a man of marked intellectual distinction, ardent in politics, great in mathematics, a faithful partisan of the Left, and ready to conform to all its formularies so far as a wide interpretation of the public interest allowed. In the original Briand Ministry Painlevé had been Minister of Education, charged with the study of inventions which might be serviceable to the armies. In this capacity he had constantly and freely toured the front, and discussed not only inventions but plans with most of the important Commanders. He knew them all, and most of them appreciated his keen intellect. Painlevé had discerned Pétain. This General was so cold and reserved to the Members of Parliamentary Commissions that he had incurred damaging unpopularity in influential circles. But Painlevé admired him for his independence, and perhaps Pétain had responded to such a recognition. Painlevé's nominee for the succession to Joffre had been Pétain. When Briand at the end of October, 1916, had reconstructed his Cabinet, he had done so on the basis of the dignified liquidation of Joffre and the enthronement of Nivelle. Painlevé, offered a renewal of his offices, had refused to continue on the specific ground that he did not agree with the appointment of Nivelle. His entrance into the Chamber after this decision—a serious one for any public man to take in time of war—had been marked by a salutation not only from the Left but almost of a general character. Now he was Minister of War, and under the aged Prime Minister, the most important figure in the new French Administration. Instead of a Briand wedded to Nivelle's success, the new Commander-in-Chief now had a Painlevé who, however loyal to his subordinate, had publicly and in advance testified that he regarded his appointment as a mistake.

Power and Opinions of Painlevé.

But Painlevé's objections to Nivelle were not limited to the personal aspect. Painlevé, and the political forces which at that time he embodied, were the declared opponents of the great offensives on the Western Front. He agreed with Pétain that France should not be bled to death, that the life of the French Army must be husbanded, that there was no chance of the break through (*la percée*) in that year in that theatre, that the gradual capture of limited objectives was the only prize within reach, and that moderation of aim and economy of the lives of French soldiers were the keynotes of the immediate military policy. Nivelle stood at the opposite pole: the offensive on the largest scale, the French in the van; the armies hurled on in absolute confidence of decisive victory; the rupture of the German line on an enormous front; the march through the gap of great armies of manœuvre; the re-establishment of open warfare; the expulsion of the invader from the soil of France. Nor were these differences of principle academic. Nivelle was actively planning the most ambitious offensive ever undertaken by the French; and Painlevé was the Minister who had to take responsibility before Parliament and before history for all that Nivelle might try to do. It is not easy to say which of the two men was in the more unpleasant position.

Had Painlevé acted upon his convictions, which in this case were proved right, he would have dismissed Nivelle and appointed to the Chief Command Pétain, in whom he had confidence and with whose general military outlook he and his party were in entire sympathy. But practical difficulties and many valid considerations dissuaded him from decisions which, if he had survived them, would have proved his title-deeds to fame. He temporized. He made the best of the situation as he found it. He bowed—who in great position has not had to do so?—before the day-to-day force and logic of circumstances, before the sullen drift of events. He acquiesced in Nivelle; he submitted to his plans—already so far advanced.

French Misgivings.

In the face of all the facts which marched upon him grimly and in spite of pressures of every kind, from every side, increasing constantly in severity, General Nivelle displayed an amazing persistence. In February he was aware of Pétain's scepticism, and of misgivings at the British Headquarters about his general plan. When the German retreat was apparent, General Micheler, his own man, chosen specially to command the main offensive, wrote to point out that everything was changed and to ask whether it was wise in the new circumstances to count on "an exploitation having the rapid character of a forward march." "The character of violence, of brutality and of rapidity," replied Nivelle on April 1, "must be maintained. It is in the speed and surprise caused by the rapid and sudden irruption of our Infantry upon the third and fourth positions that the success of the rupture will be found. No consideration should intervene of a nature to weaken the élan of the attack." Warned that the enemy were fully prepared; knowing as he did before the final signal was given that his detailed plan had fallen into their hands, he still extolled the virtue of Surprise. Behind him stood Colonel d'Alenson with fevered eye and a year to live. At his side was the redoubtable Mangin burning with the ardour of battle, confident that on the evening of the first day of the offensive his cavalry would be scampering in pursuit on the plains of Laon. But elsewhere in the high commands of the armies and in the Bureaux of the Headquarters Staff, doubt and distrust welled in chilling floods.

New Factors.

Painlevé became Minister of War on March 19. Everyone knew that the offensive was imminent. "On the 20th," wrote Painlevé, "before even being installed in the Ministry, I learned, I might say by public voice, that this was fixed for April 8, and that in consequence the British would attack at Arras on the 4th." These dates were eventually postponed from day to day by

Photo : Central News.

CAPTURED GERMAN MINENWERFER.

The gains obtained by General Nivelle as a result of his offensive in April, 1917, fell far short of expectations, although the opening days yielded some 17,000 prisoners and a mass of war material. French soldiers are seen here with a captured German minenwerfer or heavy trench mortar.

unsuitable weather until April 9 and 16 respectively. On March 22 the Minister had his first interview with the Commander-in-Chief. He told him that it was well known his choice for the Commander of the army would have been different, but that was past, and he could count on his full support. Painlevé proceeded however to point out that the original plan of operations had been affected by a series of first-class events. The German retreat, the outbreak of the Russian revolution, the certain and imminent entry of the United States into the war against Germany—surely these had introduced some modification into the problem. In the name of the Government he urged the General to review the situation and reconsider his position freely, without feeling himself tied by any expectations he had previously formed himself or expressed to others. "A new situation ought to be considered with a new eye."

Nivelle Inflexible.

Nivelle's mind was not open to such argument. His confidence was unshakable. According to Painlevé,[1] he expressed himself as follows: The German retreat did not inconvenience him. It liberated more French than German divisions. He could not himself have prescribed movements of the enemy which would better have favoured his own decisions. The narrowing of the front of attack would be remedied by prolonging the French right and including a portion of the Army group under Pétain, opposite Moronvillers. The enemy's front would be broken, it might almost be said, without loss. As for the Plateau of Craonne "he had it in his pocket," the only thing he feared was that the Germans would make off. The more they reinforced their front the more startling would be the French victory, if only the intensity of the attack were continually increased. Perhaps the third day one might draw breath on the Serre after 30 kilometres of pursuit, but "it would be difficult to hold the troops back once they got started," and so on. Such was the mood of General Nivelle.

Upon the new Minister of War there flowed advices of a very different char-

[1] "*Comment j'ai nommé Foch et Pétain.*"

acter. Staff officers of the highest credentials wrote secretly, at the risk of their commissions, solemn, reasoned warnings of the impending disaster, if the orders which had been given were actually carried out. All the three Commanders of army groups, Franchet d'Espérey, Pétain, even Micheler, in respectful but decisive terms dissociated themselves from the idea that a sudden violent rupture of the front was practicable. All three however recognized the danger of allowing the initiative to pass to the enemy. Pétain alone suggested a pregnant alternative, namely to let the Germans attack the French, and then launch the prepared French offensive as a gigantic counter-stroke.

Painlevé summoned a conference which met on the evening of April 3 at the War Ministry, at which the Prime Minister and the Commander-in-Chief, together with several other Ministers, were present. He drew General Nivelle's attention to the misgivings of his principal subordinates. To the last Nivelle was undaunted. Complete victory was certain. The first two positions of the enemy would be carried with insignificant loss. Did they think he was unaware that to take the third and fourth positions one must begin by taking the first and second? No one knew better than he that good weather was essential to his mode of attack. All would be decided in twenty-four hours, or forty-eight at the most. If within that time the rupture was not obtained it would be useless to persevere. "Under no pretext," he declared, "will I recommence a Somme battle." Finally, if he did not command their confidence, let them appoint a successor. The Ministers were overwhelmed by this extraordinary assurance, and General Nivelle left the conference convinced that the last word had been spoken.

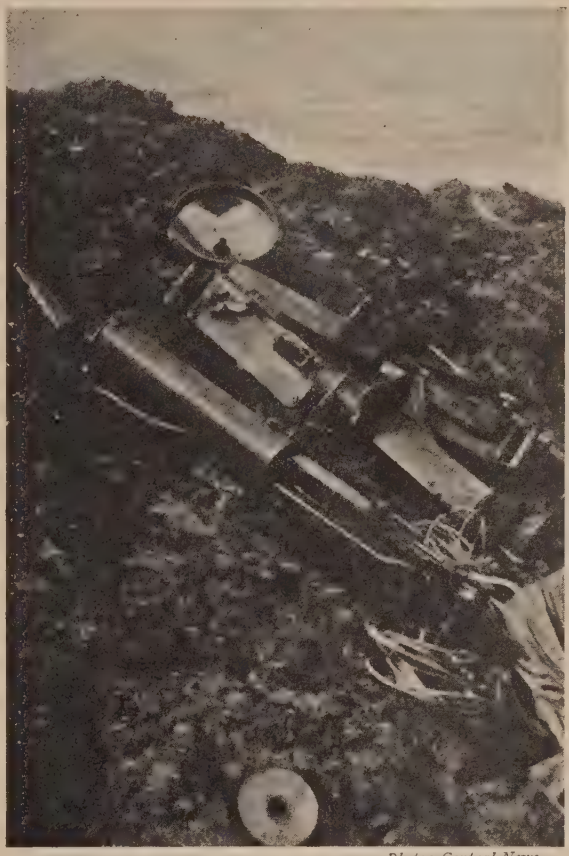


Photo: Central News.

AFTER THE ATTACK.

Dismantled German machine guns in a German trench on the first day of Nivelle's offensive. The artillery preparation for the battle was thorough and severe. The bombardment lasted for five consecutive days and nights, and the German trenches, as can be seen from this photograph and that on the opposite page, were pulverised.

The Eve of Battle.

Several times in this struggle the name of General Messimy occurs, and always finds itself associated with decided action for good or for ill. We see him in 1911 as War Minister arraigning Michel the Prophet before a Sanhedrin of Generals and dismissing him into the cool shades. We see him on August 25,

THE ADVANCE OF TH

An exceptionally fine picture taken during the actual advance of the Canadians on April 9, 191
La Folie Farm and La Folie Wood, was taken, although fierce resistance was encountere
capable of giving security to large garrisons, enable

1914, again at the centre of power, serving General Joffre with the formal order to assign at least three Army Corps to the defence of Paris, which that General had proposed to declare an "open town" and to abandon as such. We see him a few days later removed from the War Office by one of the innumerable and to the foreigner baffling shufflings of French politics in the very height and climax of the war's opening convulsions, but not until he had ordered that Paris should be defended, had procured the necessary army, and had appointed Galliéni, instead of his former victim, Michel, to the vital task. Thereafter at once he takes his place at the head of a brigade and vanishes into the dust and confusion of the conflict, until now on April 5, 1917, two and a half years later, Messimy emerges quite suddenly with an extremely irregular letter which he presented to Monsieur Ribot. This letter marshalled all the arguments against the offensive. "Prisoners yes, guns yes, a narrow band of territory of perhaps 10 or 12 kilometres; but at an outrageous cost, and without strategic results. Urgent conclusion—give without losing an hour the order to delay the attack till the weather improves." These views he declared written "almost under the dictation of Micheler," and represented the conviction of the "most famous Chiefs of the French Army."

But now the hour was imminent. The vast preparations were everywhere moving forward to explosion point. The British Cabinet had been won over. The British Headquarters had been persuaded. The co-operation of England, the great Ally, had by a tremendous effort been obtained, and once obtained would be given with crude and downright force. To resist the plan, to dismiss the Commander, meant not only a Ministerial and a Parliamentary crisis—possibly fatal to the Government—but

Photo: Central News.

IADIANS ON VIMY RIDGE.

By 6.30 a.m. the whole front-line system of the German trenches above Neuville St. Vaast, by at Thélus. Thélus was a remarkably strong point. The Thélus caves, great underground caverns the Germans there to escape the worst of the shelling.

it also meant throwing the whole plan of campaign for the year into the melting-pot, and presumably, though not certainly, resigning the initiative to the Germans. So Nivelle and Painlevé, these two men whose highest ambitions had both been newly and almost simultaneously gratified, found themselves in the most unhappy positions which disillusioned mortals can occupy: the Commander having to dare the utmost risks with an utterly sceptical Chief behind him; the Minister having to become responsible for a frightful slaughter at the bidding of a General in whose capacity he did not believe, and upon a military policy of the folly of which he was justly convinced. Such is the pomp of power!

The 16th of April.

I shall not attempt to describe the course either of the French offensive which began on April 16 nor of the brilliant preliminary operation by which the British Army at the battle of Arras captured the whole of the Vimy Ridge. Numerous excellent accounts—French, English and German—are extant. It will here be sufficient to say that the French troops attacked in unfavourable weather with their customary gallantry. On a portion of the main front attacked they penetrated to a depth of 3 kilometres; they took between the 16th and the 20th 21,000 prisoners and 185 guns, lost over 100,000 soldiers and failed to procure any strategic decision. It was only indeed on the fronts of Moronvillers and Soissons-Craonne, added by Nivelle to the attack after the documents captured by the enemy had actually been written, that surprise and success were alike achieved. By the evening of the 16th Nivelle's high hopes and confidence had withered, and his orders for the resumption of battle on the 17th implied not merely tactical modifications

but the substitution of far more moderate strategic aims.

The later phases of the battle were in some respects more successful than its beginning; nor were the losses of the French so disproportionate to those of the Germans as in the Joffre offensives. In fact the Nivelle offensive was the least costly, both actually and relatively to the enemy's loss, of any ever undertaken by the French. But the General could never escape from the consequences of his sanguine declarations. Again and again he had affirmed that, unless the rupture was immediate and total " within twenty-four or forty-eight hours," it would be useless to continue the operation. He had predicted such a rupture with many circumstances of detail. Almost everyone had doubted before. Now all doubts were certainties. The slaughter, woeful to the shrunken manhood of France, was fiercely exaggerated. Disturbances broke out among the troops, and in the capital a storm of fury arose against the General. His wish to convert the great operation into a more modest enterprise was brushed aside. On April 29 Pétain became, as Chief of the General Staff, the adviser of the French Cabinet on the whole conduct of the military operations.

British Persistency.

A peculiar situation followed the collapse of Nivelle's offensive. The British Army had, as we have seen, already entered with vigour and success upon their very important part in the general plan. The victory of Arras, with its capture of the Vimy Ridge, thirteen thousand prisoners and two hundred guns, had been achieved without undue sacrifice. Haig had originally intended to close these operations after the capture of Monchy-le-Preux and to begin as soon as possible the attempt to clear the coastal sector by the capture of the Messines and Passchendaele ridges. But the conditions prevailing in the French Army and in Paris were such that it was thought dangerous to relax even for a few weeks the pressure upon the enemy. The continuance of the British attack

GENERAL NIVELLE'S EXPERIMENT.

Sketch map showing the progress of General Nivelle's much advertised offensive between April 16 1917, and May 5, 1917.

was however very costly, and unrewarded by any real success. At an early stage the Germans developed a new method of defence. Holding their front system of trenches with very few men, they kept strong forces intact close at hand, and by heavy counter-attacks independently launched they robbed, in nearly every case, the British of their initial gains.

The Prime Minister was himself deeply committed by his facile acceptance of the Nivelle schemes to the offensive mood. He showed himself resolute to persevere. The British Army should be thrown ungrudgingly into the battle of attrition, and every effort must be made to induce the French to exert themselves unceasingly to the utmost. General Headquarters thus found in Mr. Lloyd George at this juncture a strong supporter. His action cannot be judged apart from the situation. The hour was tragic. The U-boat sinkings for April, surpassing all previous records, had reached the total of 800,000 tons. The fatal curve was still rising, and in British minds it dominated everything. "Let the armies fight while time remained." Or in Lord Fisher's challenging phrase, "Can the Army win the war before the Navy loses it?" Prime Minister, Commander-in-Chief and Sir William Robertson proceeded together to Paris, and in conference on May 4 and 5, Mr. Lloyd George addressed to Messieurs Ribot, Painlevé and General Pétain some of the most strenuous exhortations to continue the offensive that have ever passed between Allies. The whole proceedings of the conference have been published by Mermeix in one of his excellent books.[1] They form an astonishing chapter in Anglo-French relations and in the life of Mr. Lloyd George.

Lloyd George and the French Government.

Sir William Robertson sternly demanded a continuance of the offensive, and an agreement on this was reached among the Generals. Then Mr. Lloyd George began. "We have wished," he said, "to make sure that there was agreement between us on the general principle of continuing the offensive with all our resources and with all our energies." Speaking in the presence of Nivelle and championing his case against his own Government, "we have no need," he went on, "to know the details which concern particularly those who have the direct responsibility for the military operations. We prefer that Generals shall keep their plans of execution to themselves. When plans are put on paper for communication to Ministers, it is rare that the Ministers are the only ones to know them. We do not seek to know the precise plan of attack nor the number of guns or divisions engaged. It is essential that these details remain secret. In England we do not ask such questions. Besides, General Robertson does not encourage us to ask them. We treat him with the respect which he deserves and we refrain from indiscreet curiosity." Under this allusion Ribot and Painlevé both interrupted to declare themselves in agreement with the rule that apart from general principles and the outline of the plan everything must rest with the Generals alone. Mr. Lloyd George continued: "In the name of the British Government we declare to you that we approve the military protocol which General Robertson has just read. But there must be no doubt about the sense of this document. Do we mean by an offensive an offensive limiting numbers to two or three divisions, or an offensive of great armies like that which Marshal Haig has launched before Arras? After full consideration the British War Cabinet ask of its French colleagues to push the offensive during the course of this year with all the force of which our two armies are capable."

His Exhortations.

He proceeded to dilate upon the results of the offensive so far as it had gone. "The highest hopes have not been realized, but without hopes, even beyond what is possible, how shall we find the indispensable impetus of war? In spite of all, we have taken 45,000 prisoners, 450 guns, 800 mitrailleuses, and we

[1] *Nivelle et Painlevé.*

secured 200 square kilometres. Supposing it was the Germans who had obtained these results, how great would have been our own discouragement! We ought not to leave the enemy a single moment of rest. If we stopped our offensive or if we limited ourselves to small demonstrations the Germans will say the Allies are beaten and by going on sinking ships we shall starve England and render the continuation of the war impossible." He concluded by urging the most extreme intensity of action throughout the whole summer. The French Premier responded to this objurgation with some reserve. He undertook to continue the offensive, subject to not squandering the reserves of France. He expressed admiration of the resolute language of Mr. Lloyd George, with which his own sentiments accorded. Painlevé also declared that the battle would continue with all possible energy. "We have kept our promises and done our part," was Mr. Lloyd George's final remark, "and we are confident you will keep yours."

These undertakings extorted in full conference from the French Government by the imperious Welshman did not accord with either the final decision of the French Staff or the facts of the case. The battle was indeed continued, and during the next fortnight both Craonne and the Chemin des Dames were captured. But upon the very day of the conference in Paris, there had occurred a deeply disquieting incident. A French division ordered into the line refused to march. The officers succeeded in recalling the soldiers to their duty, and the division took part in the fighting without discredit. It was the first drop before the downpour.

The French Mutinies.

The demoralization of the French Army was proceeding apace. Want of confidence in their leader, cruel losses and an active defeatist propaganda had produced an intense spasm throughout its ranks. Mutinies—some of a very dangerous character—occurred in sixteen separate Army Corps. Some of the finest troops were involved. Divisions elected councils. Whole regiments set out for Paris to demand a Peace by negotiation and more home leave. A Russian force of about 15,000 Infantry had before the Revolution been sent to be armed and equipped in France. These men were affected by the political developments in their own country. They had put it to the vote whether they should take part in the battle of April 16, and had decided by a majority to do so. They were used by the French in a ruthless manner, and nearly 6,000 had been killed or wounded. The survivors went into open revolt. One sentence in their Manifesto reveals the propaganda of a master hand. "We have been told," so the complaint begins, "that we have been sent to France to pay for munitions sold to Russia." It was not until prolonged artillery fire had been employed against these troops that they were reduced to submission and disbanded.

Pétain's Achievement.

The spirit of the French nation was not unequal to this perilous trial. On May 15, Nivelle refusing to resign was dismissed, and Pétain became Commander-in-Chief. Loyal troops surrounded those who had fallen from their duty. Old Territorials, the fathers of families, pleaded with the infuriated linesmen. The disorders were pacified or suppressed. Over all a veil of secrecy was thrown so impenetrable that though scores of thousands of Frenchmen were concerned, no whisper ever reached the enemy, and whatever information was imparted to Sir Douglas Haig long remained buried in the bosom of his immediate staff. Pétain was of all others fitted to the healing task. In a period of several months he visited a hundred divisions of the Army, addressed the officers and men, heard grievances and complaints, mitigated the severities of the service, increased the leave of the soldiers, and diminished by every skilful shift the fighting on the French front. He thus restored by the end of the year the morale and discipline of that sorely tried, glorious Army, upon whose sacrifices the liberties of Europe had through three fearful campaigns mainly depended.

CHAPTER LXV

THE RUSSIAN COLLAPSE

Allied Prospects for 1917—A Sudden Silence—The Czar's Ordeal—Makers of the Revolution—Rodzianko's Appeal to the Czar—The Abdication—The Ruin of the Russian Armies.

DURING the afternoon of March 13, 1917, the Russian Embassy in London informed us that they were no longer in contact with Petrograd. For some days the capital had been a prey to disorders which it was believed were being effectively suppressed. Now suddenly for a space there was a silence. Volumes have been written upon the causes and consequences of this silence. For us it draws the curtain upon the tale.

Allied Prospects for 1917.

The Allies, startled and disappointed by the German recovery at the end of 1916, had planned in closer concert than ever before what they hoped would be the decisive operations of the coming year. Each and all of the Allies were to attack at the selected moments upon all their fronts — French, British, Russian, Italian, Roumanian, Salonican. The prospects were good. The Allies now disposed of a superiority of nearly five to two, and the factories of the whole world outside enemy territory were pouring munitions and implements of war to them across the seas and oceans. Russia, from whose fathomless man-power so much was still hoped, was for the first time since the opening battles to be properly equipped. The doubled broad-gauge railway to the never-ice-bound port of Murmansk on the White Sea was now at last completed. The labours, the sufferings and dying gasps of thousands of prisoners-of-war intermingled with criminals and Chinese, toiling for months in perpetual night, had built these sixteen hundred miles of line across the frozen plains and marshes; and Russia was now for the first time in permanent contact with her Allies. Nearly 200 new battalions had been added to her forces; and behind the armies large deposits of all kinds of shell had been amassed. There seemed to be no military reason why the year 1917 should not witness the final triumph of the Allies, and bring to Russia the reward which she had sought through infinite agonies.

A Sudden Silence.

Now suddenly there was this silence. The great Power with whom we had been in such intimate comradeship, without whom all plans were meaningless, was stricken dumb. With Russian effective aid, all the Allied fronts could attack together. Without that aid it might well be that the War was lost. It was therefore with strained attention that we watched for the reopening of the telegraph lines to Petrograd.

* * * *

Many streams had flowed together to bring the deluge. The Russian revolution was begun by social, military and political forces which within a week were left aghast behind it. In its opening paroxysm all conscious Russia participated. It was primarily a patriotic revolt against the misfortunes and mismanagement of the war. Defeats and disasters, want of food and prohibition of alcohol, the slaughter of millions of men, joined with inefficiency and corruption to produce a state of exasperation among all classes which had no outlet but revolt, could find no scapegoat but the Sovereign.

For a year past the Czar and his wife had been the objects of growing universal resentment. The fond, obstinate husband and father, the absolute monarch obviously devoid of all the qualities of a national ruler in times of crisis, bore the burden of all the sufferings which the German Armies had inflicted on the Russian State. Behind him the Empress, a still more hated figure, dwelt in her tiny circle listening only to her cronies—her lady companion Madame Virubova, her spiritual adviser the sensual mystic Rasputin—and presumed thence and on such promptings to sway the whole policy and fortunes of the tormented Empire.

The Czar's Ordeal.

In vain the Imperial family, deeply concerned for their own existence—apart from all other issues—approached their Head. In vain the leaders of the Duma and every independent figure in Russia made their protests. In vain the Ambassadors of the Allied Powers dropped their elaborate hints, or even uttered solemn and formal warnings under the direction of their Governments.

Nicholas II, distressed, remained immovable. He saw as clearly as they did the increasing peril. He knew of no means by which it could be averted. In his view nothing but autocracy established through centuries had enabled the Russians to proceed thus far in the teeth of calamity. No people had suffered and sacrificed like the Russians. No State, no nation, had ever gone through trials on such a scale and retained its coherent structure. The vast machine creaked and groaned. But it still worked. One more effort and victory would come. To change the system, to open the gate to intruders, to part with any portion of the despotic power, was in the eyes of the Czar to bring about a total collapse. Therefore, though plunged daily deeper in anxiety and perplexity, he was held alike by all his instincts and his reasoning faculties in a fixed position. He stood like a baited animal tied to a stake and feebly at bay.

It is easy for critics never subjected to such ordeals to recount lost opportunities. They speak lightly of changing the fundamental principles of the Russian State in the stress of the war from absolute monarchy to some British or French parliamentary system. It would be a thankless task to assail convictions so confidently asserted. Nevertheless, the martial and national achievements of Russia in the three terrible campaigns already described constitute a prodigy no less astounding than the magnitude of her collapse thereafter. The very rigidity of the system gave it its strength and, once broken, forbade all recovery.

The absolute Czar in spite of all his lamentable deficiencies commanded Russia. It can never be proved that a three-quarters-Czar or half-Czar and the rest a Parliament, could in such a period have commanded anything at all. In fact, once the Czar was gone, no Russian ever commanded again. It was not until a fearsome set of internationalists and logicians built a sub-human structure upon the ruins of Christian civilization, that any form of order or design again emerged. Thus it is by no means certain that the generally-accepted view upon the practical steps is right, or that the Czar for all his errors and shortcomings was wrong. After all, he was within an ace of safety and success. Another month and the accession of the United States to the cause of the Allies would have brought a flood of new energy, encouragement, and moral stimulus to Russian society. The certainty of victory, never again lost, was to dawn like a new sun beyond the wastes of Asia and the Pacific Ocean.

Only another month till daybreak! Only another month and the world might have been spared the tribulations of the two most grievous years of the war. That month was lacking. A brief but hideous hiatus marred the scene. Meanwhile Nicholas II, casting his eyes now towards the Providence he sought to serve, now towards the family group he loved so well, clung chained to his post.

Makers of the Revolution.

All sorts of Russians made the

Photo: Daily Mirror.

THE PALACE GATES AT TSARSKOE SELO.

After the revolution in Russia the Emperor and Empress were placed under arrest in the palace of Tsarskoe Selo. There the Imperial Family were kept under restraint until their removal to Ekaterinburg. The palace gates, into the design of which the Imperial arms and monograms had been worked, are seen here as they appeared shortly after the revolution. The gates are guarded and the arms are covered with the red flag.

revolution. No sort of Russian reaped its profit. Among the crowds who thronged the turbulent streets and anterooms of Petrograd in these March days with resolve for "Change at all costs" in their hearts, were found Grand Dukes, fine ladies, the bitterest die-hards and absolutists like Purishkevitch and Yusupov; resolute, patriotic politicians like Rodzianko and Guchkov; experienced Generals; diplomatists and financiers of the old régime; Liberals and Democrats; Socialists like Kerenski; sturdy citizens and tradesfolk; faithful soldiers seeking to free their Prince from bad advisers; ardent nationalists resolved to purge Russia from secret German influence; multitudes of loyal peasants and workmen; and behind all, cold, calculating, ruthless, patient, stirring all, demanding all, awaiting all, the world-wide organization of International Communism.

Actually the deposition of the Czar was effected by the Chiefs of his Army. Nicholas was at his Headquarters at Mohilev when on the afternoon of March 11 the first telegrams about the disorders in Petrograd began to flow in. It was reported at first that they were of no great consequence. Had he been in his capital accessible to all the moderate forces now inflamed, there might still have been time, not indeed as we hold to avert disaster, but to lessen its shock. But he was at Mohilev, and the Grand Duke Nicholas who should have ruled the Armies was far off in the half-banishment of Tiflis. On the morning of the 11th Rodzianko, President of the Duma, confronted with a swiftly mounting crisis, sent the following telegram to his Master:

Rodzianko's Appeal to the Czar.

"Position serious. Anarchy in the capital. Government paralysed. Arrangements for transport, supply and fuel in complete disorder. General discontent is increasing. Disorderly firing on the streets. Part of the troops are firing on one another. Essential to entrust some individual who possesses the confidence of the country with the formation of a new government. There must be no delay. Any procrastination fatal. I pray to God that in this hour responsibility fall not on the wearer of the crown!"

He repeated this to the Commanders-in-Chief on all the Army-group "Fronts," and to Alexeiev at the Stavka, with a request for their support; the next day, the 12th, he telegraphed again to the Czar:

"The situation is growing worse. Immediate steps must be taken, for to-morrow will be too late. The final hour has come when the fate of the country and the dynasty must be decided."

To such grave tidings was added scarcely less disturbing news from Tsarskoe Selo. The Royal children had sickened of the measles. The Czar replied to his counsellors with hard defiance, and to his wife with overflowing sympathy.

As the day wore on Alexeiev took to his bed with anxiety and fever. The Czar called for the Imperial train. His duties as a Sovereign and as a father equally demanded his return to the seat of Government. The train was ready at midnight; but it took six hours more to clear the line. The Dowager-Empress had arrived. Mother and son travelled together. The next afternoon the train stopped at Dno. Impossible to proceed! A bridge had been, it was said, blown up or damaged. The Czar indicated an alternative route, and for the first time came in contact with naked resistance. Such authority as now reigned in Petrograd refused to permit his further approach. Where to turn? Some hours passed. Back to Mohilev? We do not know how far he tested this possibility. Perhaps he had been conscious of the unspoken reproach with which the atmosphere of the Stavka was loaded. To the Northern Front then—to General Ruzski. Here at least he would find a trusty Commander, whose armies lay nearest to the rebellious capital.

The Abdication.

The train reached Pskov. Ruzski was there with grave salutes. But with him

Photo: Copyright.

AT THE BARRICADES IN PETROGRAD.

The coming of the revolution in Russia was heralded by disturbances and fighting at many places throughout the country. In Petrograd the immediate cause of disorder was a temporary shortage of bread. The anger of the mob was excited by repressive measures on the part of the police, who in an attempt to disperse the crowds fired upon them, killing and wounding about three hundred. Soon the city was in a state of turmoil. Buildings were burned, barricades were erected, and for the first time in history Cossacks fraternised with the people.

also very soon were Guchkov and Shulguin as a deputation from the Duma. Here were able, determined public men with plain advice: immediate abdication in favour of his son, and the Regency of his brother, the Grand Duke Michael Alexandrovich. The Czar appealed to Ruzski. Ruzski, anticipating his responsibilities, had felt that the matter was too serious for him. Already before the Czar's arrival he had consulted the Stavka and the other commanders. Accordingly fateful telegrams had been dispatched through the Stavka along the whole length of the Russian front. All the Army Group Commanders, Brusilov, Ewarth, the Grand Duke, and finally, with many reservations, Sakharov from distant Roumania, declared in favour of abdication.

The document was drawn. Guchkov presented the pen. Nicholas was about to sign. Suddenly he asked whether he and his family could reside in the Crimea, in that palace of Livadia whose sunlit gardens seemed green and calm and tranquil. Bluntly he was told he must leave Russia forthwith, and that the new sovereign must remain among his people. On this his fatherly love triumphed over his public duty and indeed over his coronation oath. Rather than be separated from his son, he disinherited that son. The paper was redrafted and Nicholas II abdicated in favour of his brother. Thus all claim of legitimacy was shivered; and everything in a second stage was thrown into redoubled confusion.

However, it is over now. The Czar has ceased to reign. The brother, around whom everything is melting, fears to seize the abandoned reins of power without the vote of a National Assembly, impossible to obtain. Nothing could ever bring stabilizing ideas together again. We cannot here follow the long, swift, splintering, crashing descent which ended as it could only end, in the abyss. The dynasty was gone. Vainly did leaders of the Duma and the Zemstvos strive to clutch at hand-holds. In their turn they broke. Vainly did Kerenski with his nationalist democracy try to stop the fall a long leap lower down. Vainly did the great men of action, Kornilov the warrior, Savinkov the terrorist-patriot, strive to marshal the social revolutionary forces in defence of Russia. All fell headlong into the

depths where Lenin, Trotski, Zinoviev and the other unnatural spirits awaited their prey.

The Ruin of the Russian Armies.

We are here concerned only to notice the ruin of those brave armies which had hitherto guarded the Russian land. On March 15 the Petrograd Soviet issued the fatal historic "Order No. 1" which destroyed the discipline of the troops, and delivered the Russian Army in the full storm of war to the rule of elected committees. Nothing mattered any more after that. The soldiers ceased to fight the foreign invaders. Their energies and hatreds were turned upon their own officers. The ignominious tragedies of the Kerenski offensive and the flight from the Riga bridgehead deserve no place in this account. Russia became incapable of offence, of defence or even of retreat. Peace at any price was the only resource. It needed all Lenin's cold massive logic to compel even the most extreme of those who had laid Russia low to accept the consequences of their acts. An armistice was arranged in November and the Treaty of Brest-Litovsk was signed in the following March.

The uncertainties and obscurity of the Russian situation, and memories of their painful surprise at Brusilov's hands, held a large but mainly motionless force of Austrian and German troops upon the Russian front until the Armistice. Even in October, 1917, there were still eighty Teutonic divisions in the East. But in November Austria with German backing threw her main strength upon Italy at Caporetto, and at the close of the year Ludendorff requested Hoffmann to arrange the transport of a million men—fifty divisions and five thousand guns—from Russia to the Western Front. The gigantic heart-shaking battles of 1918, involving the death or mutilation of upwards of two million of British, French and German soldiers, followed their appointed course. The Eastern Front was at an end.

Photo: Record Press.

THE PEOPLE'S GOVERNMENT.

Delegates of the Committee of Soldiers are seen here during a session in the great hall of the Russian Duma. The large frame on the wall in the central background formerly contained a portrait of the Emperor Its removal from its place is significant.

CHAPTER LXVI

AT THE MINISTRY OF MUNITIONS

I Rejoin the Government—Munitions Supply—The Admiralty Claims—The Limiting Factors—Reorganization of the Ministry of Munitions—The Munitions Council—The Work of the Munitions Council—Sir James Stevenson—My Memorandum of November 9, 1916—The Attack by Armoured Vehicles—Scale and Intensity—Futility of Pure Attrition—Six Forms of War Machinery—Blasting Power and Moving Power—The Fateful Issue.

ON July 16, 1917, the Prime Minister invited me to join the new Government. He proposed to me either the Ministry of Munitions or the newly created Air Ministry, with the proviso that if I chose the latter, he must have till the afternoon to make certain personal rearrangements in the Administration. I said at once that I preferred Munitions; and the matter was settled in as many words as I here set down.

I Rejoin the Government.

The appointment was announced the next morning. There was an outcry among those who at that time had accustomed themselves to regard me with hostility. An immediate protest was made by the Committee of the National Union of Conservative Associations, and an influential deputation of Unionist members presented themselves to the leader of the Party in strong complaint. Mr. Lloyd George had however prepared the ground with his accustomed patience. Lord Northcliffe was on a mission to the United States, and appeased. Sir Edward Carson and General Smuts were warm advocates. The group of Ministers who had successfully prevented my entering the Government on its formation was no longer intact. Some had been previously placated: the remnant acquiesced. And Mr. Bonar Law, who had always been a friend, returned a very stiff answer to his deputation. I was re-elected for Dundee by a remarkable majority, and took up my duties without delay. Not allowed to make the plans, I was set to make the weapons.

Munitions Supply.

The internal conditions of munitions supply, and indeed the whole structure of the British Executive, were vastly different from those I had quitted twenty months before, and still more from the days when I was First Lord of the Admiralty. In the first period of the war—indeed almost to the end of 1915—the resources of Britain far exceeded any organization which could employ them. Whatever was needed for the fleets and armies had only to be ordered in good time and on a large enough scale. The chief difficulty was to stretch the mind to a hitherto unimagined size of events. Megalomania was a positive virtue. Indeed, to add a nought, or a couple of noughts, to almost any requisition or plan for producing war supplies would have constituted an act of merit.

Now all was changed. Three years of the struggle had engaged very nearly the whole might of the nation. Munition production of every kind was already upon a gigantic scale. The whole island was an arsenal. The enormous national factories which Mr. Lloyd George had planned were just beginning to function. The first difficulties with the Trade Unions about the dilution of labour had been overcome.

Hundreds of thousands of women were making shells and fuses cheaper and better than the most skilled craftsmen had done before the war. The keenest spirits in British industry were gathered as State servants in the range of palatial hotels which housed the Ministry of Munitions. The former trickles and streamlets of war supplies now flowed in rivers rising continuously.

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

RECRUITING POSTER: MINISTRY OF MUNITIONS.

The Ministry of Munitions was set up in June, 1915. Had some such organization existed in 1914 the conflict might have been shortened. War, as planned by Germany in 1914, was on a scale hitherto unheard of. Her army was supported by a weight of artillery greater than anything previously known. Against this, Britain with her small store of shells held available against frontier wars, was helpless. Her ordnance arrangements were entirely inadequate. The Navy alone was prepared.

The Admiralty Claims—The Limiting Factors.

Nevertheless the demands of the fighting fronts eagerly and easily engulfed all that could be produced. We were in the presence of requirements at once imperative and apparently insatiable; and now at last our ultimate capacity began to come into view. I found myself in a world of "Limiting Factors" and "Priorities." All problems were complicated by the fact that the Admiralty had not been brought within the general sphere of munitions supply. When the munitions crisis of May, 1915, had overwhelmed the War Office and the Liberal Government, the Admiralty had not been found wanting in any important respect. All supplies for the Fleets were at hand or coming forward in abundance in consequence of the orders we had placed at the beginning of the war, and which had received a further expansion during my partnership with Lord Fisher. The Admiralty therefore had been able to retain their separate and privileged position. They had their own great supply departments, their own factories, their own programmes, and their own allegiances. In a period when a general view and a just proportion were the master-keys, they vigorously asserted their claim to be a realm within a realm—efficient, colossal, indispensable, well-disposed, but independent.

In their view the Navy came first not only in essentials, but in refinements, not only in minima, but in precautionary margins. And of all these the Board of Admiralty was the sole

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

WAR OF MUNITIONS DIAGRAM.

Another poster issued by the Ministry of Munitions. The title of this poster strikes a new note. War is no longer a brilliant spectacle, an affair of cavalry, of romance, of glamour. Victory in any future war will go, not to the finest men, but to the nation with the greatest supplies of metal, explosives and chemicals.

judge. Theirs was the first claim upon materials and skilled labour of all kinds. After that had been met, they were genuinely glad that the Armies, the Air Force, and, at a considerable interval, the civil population should be adequately maintained. This dominating position was fortified by the grave anxieties of the U-boat campaign, and lost nothing from the virile personality of the new First Lord.

The career of Sir Eric Geddes during the war had been astonishing. As the General Manager of an important railway, versed in every detail of its working from the humblest to the highest, he possessed not only the practical organizing power of a skilful business man, but the *quasi*-official outlook of the head of a great public service. To this he added those qualities of mental and physical energy, of industry, of thoroughness and compulsive force, often successful, always admirable, and never more needed than at this time. He had risen rapidly under Mr. Lloyd George to be one of the principal figures of the Ministry of Munitions in its early days. He had reorganized the railways of the British front in France with the rank and uniform of a Major-General. He had controlled the Supply Departments of the Navy with the rank and uniform of a Vice-Admiral. Now the same hand which had conducted him through these swift and surprising transformations placed him at the head of the Board of Admiralty. He reinforced its particularism with an ability and domineering vigour all his own.

Judged by the truest sense of proportion, the Navy had a right to absolute priority in all that was necessary to grapple with the supreme peril of the U-boat attack, including the vast replacement of the sunken merchant ships. But

when such rights were extended to all the other branches of the Naval Service, and even to strengthening the battle-fleet and increasing its already overflowing resources of stores, guns and ammunition, a serious inroad was made upon what was due to the armies and to the ever-growing service of the air. The War Cabinet, riveted by the U-boat attack and rightly determined to give the Navy all it wanted for the purpose of meeting it, was not found capable of drawing the necessary distinctions between this and less imperious services. In consequence the Grand Fleet absorbed in the final phases of the war a larger share of our resources than was its due, and our war effort in the field was unwarrantably diminished to that extent.

The principal limiting factors to munitions production with which I was confronted in the autumn of 1917 were four in number, viz. shipping (tonnage), steel, skilled labour and dollars. The last of these had been rendered less acute by the accession of the United States to the Allies. We had already sold a thousand millions sterling of American securities, and had borrowed heavily to feed and equip ourselves, and our Allies, before this decisive event. Our trans-atlantic credits were practically exhausted at the beginning of 1917. The dollar situation was now somewhat relieved. A door that would otherwise have closed altogether was now held partially open. None the less the limits of the power of purchase both in American and Canadian dollars imposed a restrictive finger on the lay-out of every programme.

The stringency in shipping was acute. The losses of the U-boat war, the requirements of the armies in every theatre, the food and what remained of the trade of Britain, the needs of the Allies, the increasing desires of the United States, and the importations of all the raw materials of war, had drawn out our Mercantile Marine to its most intense strain. Tonnage therefore was at this period the controlling factor in our production. Steel ranked next to tonnage, and was a more direct measure of war effort. The steel output of Great Britain had already nearly doubled. Mines which would not pay in peace had come into active production. But in the main we depended for iron ore upon the north coast of Spain, and all vessels which carried it ran perilous voyages amid frequent sinkings. In addition we bought finished steel to the utmost limit of our dollars from the United States and Canada, as well as shell castings of every intermediate form.

Of all we produced or obtained the Admiralty took their fill. The prime need was the replacement of merchant ships sunk by submarines. The War Cabinet had approved an ambitious programme of building 3,000,000 tons of mercantile shipping in 1918. This claimed priority even over the innumerable anti-U-boat flotillas. Next came the improved heavy-shell outfits which the disappointing experiences of Jutland were claimed to require. Not till these and other less vital naval demands had been satisfied could the requirements of the British armies for guns, shells, tanks and indispensable subsidiaries be considered. We had also to provide a large proportion of steel for the French shell factories under arrangements we had made early in the war: and to Italy we had to send both steel and coal in serious quantities under agreements, failure in which would have crippled her fighting strength.

Lastly, there were the limits fixed by the supply of skilled labour. And here again the Army and the Air Force clashed with the Admiralty at a hundred points. All the most perfect lethal instruments were demanded at once by the three Services, and at the same time ever-increasing numbers of skilled artisans were drawn into the fighting sphere. The ceaseless process of training and dilution steadily expanded our supply. But in spite of the earnest help afforded by all the responsible Labour leaders, Trade Union principles and prejudices made every step delicate. Such were the main features of the task with which I had the honour to be entrusted.

If I were to attempt to exhaust the details, this chapter would become a

volume. We depended, and through us the Allies, upon the sea power which drew from the remotest portions of the globe not only the bulky imports, but all those rare and scarce commodities without which steel cannot be hardened or explosives made, or science realize its full death-dealing power, or an island people get their daily bread. Some of these aspects will emerge in the narrative.

Reorganization of the Ministry of Munitions.

The growth of the Ministry of Munitions had far outstripped its organization. A year had passed since its creator, Mr. Lloyd George, had moved on to still more intense spheres. The two gifted Ministers who had succeeded him, Mr. Montagu and Dr. Addison, had dealt with the needs as they arose, shouldering one responsibility after another, adding department to department and branch to branch, without altering in essentials the central organization from the form it had assumed in the empirical and convulsive period of creation. All the main and numberless minor decisions still centred upon the Minister himself. I found a staff of 12,000 officials organized in no less than fifty principal departments each claiming direct access to the Chief, and requiring a swift flow of decisions upon most intricate and inter-related problems. I set to work at once to divide and distribute this dangerous concentration of power.

The Munitions Council.

Under a new system the fifty departments of the Ministry were grouped into ten large units each in charge of a head who was directly responsible to the Minister. These ten heads of groups of departments were themselves formed into a Council like a Cabinet. The members of the Council were charged with dual functions: first, to manage their group of departments; secondly, to take a general interest in the whole business of the Ministry. They were to develop a "Council sense," and not to regard themselves as confined to their own special sphere.

Each group of departments was denoted by a letter. Thus D was design, G guns, F finance, P projectiles, X explosives, and so on. By ringing the changes upon these letters committees could be formed exactly adapted to handle any particular topic, while the general movement of business was held firmly together by means of a co-ordinating or "Clamping" committee. The "big business men" who now formed the Council were assisted by a strong cadre of Civil Servants, and I obtained for this purpose from the Admiralty my old friends Sir William Greene and Mr. Masterton-Smith. Thus we had at once the initiative, drive, force and practical experience of the open competitive world coupled with those high standards of experience, of official routine, and of method, which are the qualifications of the Civil Service.

The new organization was announced to the public on August 18 in a memorandum from which the following paragraphs are taken:—

". . . In the fourth year of the war, we are no longer tapping the stored-up resources of national industry or mobilizing them and applying them for the first time to war. The magnitude of the effort and of the achievement approximates continually to the limits of possibility. Already in many directions the frontiers are in sight. It is therefore necessary not simply to expand, but to go back over ground already covered, and by more economical processes, by closer organization, and by thrifty and harmonious methods, to glean and gather a further reinforcement of war power.

"It is necessary for this purpose that the Minister of Munitions should be aided and advised by a Council formally established. The time has come to interpose between more than fifty separate departments on the one hand and the Minister on the other, an organism which in the main will play a similar part and serve similar needs as the Board of Admiralty or the Army Council. It has been decided therefore to form the

departments of the Ministry into ten groups, classified as far as possible by kindred conditions, placing in superintendence over each group an experienced officer of the Ministry, and to form these officers into a Council for the transaction of business of all kinds in accordance with the general policy which the Minister receives from the Cabinet."[1]

Here is my Council as it began :—

Financial Secretary. — Sir LAMING WORTHINGTON-EVANS.

Parliamentary Secretary.—Mr. KELLAWAY.

GROUPS OF DEPARTMENTS.

F. *Finance.*—Sir HERBERT HAMBLING.

D. *Design.*—Major-General the Hon. FRANCIS BINGHAM.

S. *Steel and Iron.*—Mr. JOHN HUNTER.

M. *Materials.*—Sir ERNEST MOIR.

X. *Explosives.*—Sir KEITH PRICE.

P. *Projectiles, etc.*—Sir JAMES STEVENSON.

G. *Guns.*—Sir GLYN WEST.

E. *Engines.*—Sir ARTHUR DUCKHAM.

A. *Allies.*—Sir FREDERICK BLACK, later SIR CHARLES ELLIS.

L. *Labour.*—Sir STEPHENSON KENT.

THE SECRETARIAT.

(*At a later date.*)

R. *Requirements and Statistics.*—Mr. LAYTON.

War Office Representative. — Major-General FURSE.

W. *Trench Warfare and Inventions.*—Major-General SEELY.

[1] *See* Appendix.

Photo: Newspaper Illustrations.

THE SIGN OF THE ALLIES.

Girls engaged in painting the familiar red, white and blue circles sign which was the distinguishing mark of the Allies' aeroplanes.

The relief was instantaneous. I was no longer oppressed by heaps of bulky files. Every one of my ten Councillors was able to give important final decisions in his own sphere. The daily Council meeting kept them in close relation with each other and with the general scheme; while the system of committees of Councillors enabled special questions to be brought to speedy conclusion. Once the whole organization was in motion it never required change. Instead of struggling through the jungle on foot I rode comfortably on an elephant whose trunk could pick up a pin or uproot a tree with equal ease, and from whose back a wide scene lay open.[1]

I confined myself to the assignment and regulation of work, to determining the emphasis and priority of particular supplies, to the comprehensive view of the war programmes, and to the initia-

[1] My minutes and memoranda of the time tell the story much better than any subsequent account which I could write. Accordingly from very large numbers I have selected enough to give a picture alike of the problem and of the movement of events. These will be found in an Appendix.

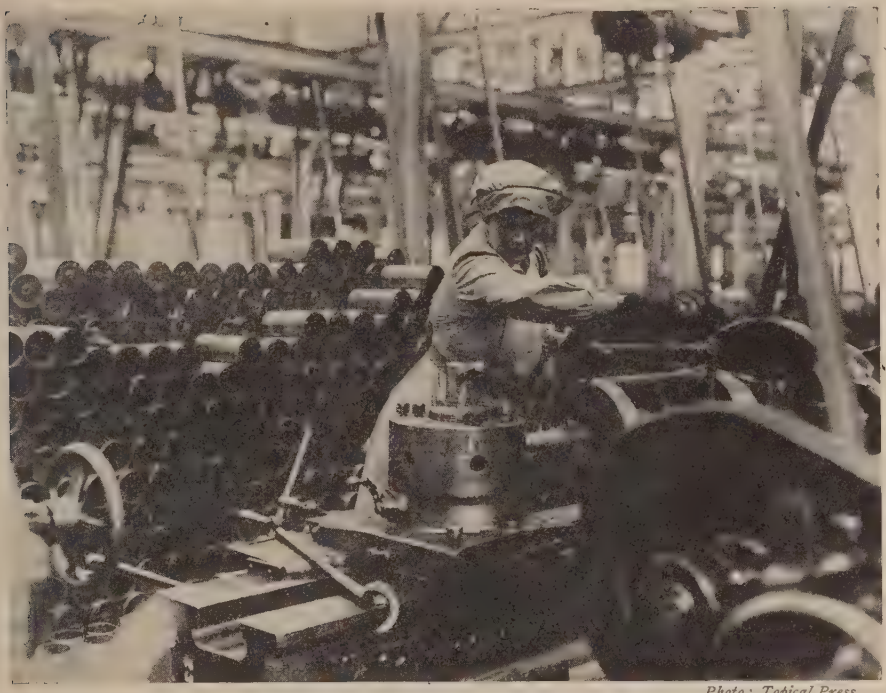


Photo: Topical Press.

WOMEN'S WORK IN MUNITIONS.

Here, surrounded by complicated machinery and whirring beltings, a woman is engaged in turning out brass cartridge cases for the field guns. To the devoted labour of thousands of women during the war years the nation in part owed her safety.

tion of special enterprises. After five months' experience of the new system I was able to say, "I practically always approve a Council Committee report exactly as it comes. I think I have hardly ever altered a word. I read each report through with great attention and see the decision on the question, which I know is ever so much better than I could have produced myself, if I had studied it for two whole days."

The Work of the Munitions Council.

At the Ministry of Munitions I worked with incomparably the largest and most powerful staff in my experience. Here were gathered the finest business brains of the country working with might and main and with disinterested loyalty for the common cause. Many if not most of the leading men stood at the head of those industries which were most expanded by war needs. They therefore resigned altogether the immense fortunes which must inevitably have come to them, had they continued as private contractors. They served the State for honour alone. They were content to see men of lesser standing in their own industries amass great wealth and extend the scale of their business. In the service of the Crown there was a keen rivalry among them; and the position of Member of Council with its general outlook was deeply prized. According to the Statute constituting the office, the whole authority rested with the Minister; but in practice the Council had a true collective responsibility.

If in these pages I dwell with pride upon the extraordinary achievements of the Munitions Council in the field of supply, it is not to appropriate the credit. That belongs in the first instance to Mr. Lloyd George, who gathered together

Photo: Imperial War Museum.

IN A SHELL-FILLING FACTORY.

Many operations are involved in the manufacture of a heavy shell. When the metal parts are machined there is the more dangerous task of filling the projectile with the explosive charge. The girls seen here are wearing respirators as a protection against fumes. As is well known, certain explosives may be injurious to health both by touch and inhalation.

the great majority of these able men, and whose foresight in creating the national factories laid the foundations for subsequent production. It belongs also to the men who did the work, who quarried and shaped the stones, and to whose faithful, resourceful, untiring contrivance and exertion the Army and the nation owe a lasting debt.

It would be difficult and invidious for me to single out individuals among those who are still living. Their services have not been unrewarded by the Crown. But there is one who has gone from us to whom this account offers me the opportunity of paying tribute.

Sir James Stevenson.

James Stevenson[1] was the most ingenious and compulsive manager and masterer of difficulties—material or personal—with whom I have ever served. Whether at the Ministry of Munitions or after the war when he accompanied me to the War Office and to the Colonial Office, no task however laborious, no problem however baffling, once it had been remitted to him, was ever a source of subsequent difficulty or complaint. With him, with his close colleague, Sir Arthur Duckham, and with the young, profound Professor Layton, who assembled and presented the weekly statistics, I was brought into the closest daily contact. These three constituted for me the mainspring, both of action and of review, by which the central control of the immense organization was exercised. Stevenson is dead. He died at fifty, worn out, as thoroughly as a brave soldier in the trenches, by his exertions in the public service. He left behind him a reputation, sustained by the opinion of Ministers of many Depart-

[1] Afterwards Lord Stevenson.

ments and of all Parties, for ability, integrity and devotion which should afford an example and an inspiration to the business men of Britain. To the deep appreciation of his work and gifts declared by those in a position to judge, I wish to add my testimony.

* * * *

The relief afforded by the new organization in the general business of supply, gave me time to pursue my ideas upon mechanical attack. After the apparition of the tanks at the taking of Flers a year earlier, in September, 1916, and in the disappointment with which the end of the Somme battle oppressed the Cabinet, I had, though in nominal opposition, some credit in official circles. At the wish of the Minister of Munitions I had written a paper upon "The greater application of mechanical power to the prosecution of an offensive on land." Mr. Montagu had it printed for the Committee of Imperial Defence and circulated it to the Cabinet.

My Memorandum of November 9, 1916.

November 9, 1916.

1. The conditions of this war deny to the stronger power, whether on sea or land, its legitimate offensive scope. In all previous wars the stronger army was able to force matters to a final decision. The great developments of defensive power now prevent this.

2. We shall never have a superiority in number sufficient to triumph by itself. At present the fighting forces are much too evenly balanced. We have perhaps a superiority of five to four in fighting formations on all fronts, but the enemy's advantage of being on interior lines more than covers this. Even if we have a superiority of six to four, that will be insufficient, and we are not likely to see a greater superiority than this for a very long time.

3. Frontal attacks were abandoned forty years ago on account of the severity of fire. Now that the severity of fire has enormously increased and is constantly increasing, they are forced upon us in the absence of flanks.

4. Two methods of frontal attack have been tried. First the unlimited, as at Loos and Champagne, where the troops were given a distant objective behind the enemy's lines and told to march on that; and second, the limited form as tried by the Germans at Verdun, and by ourselves and the French on the Somme. Neither produces

Photo: Elliott & Fry.

LORD STEVENSON.

Member of the Munitions Council. Of Sir James Stevenson, as he then was, it is perhaps fitting to quote here a brief extract from the text: "Stevenson is dead. He died at fifty, worn out, as thoroughly as a brave soldier in the trenches, by his exertions in the public service."

decisive results. The unlimited simply leads to the troops being brought up against uncut wire and undamaged machine guns. The limited always enables the enemy to move his artillery away, and to sell a very little ground at a heavy price in life, gaining time all the while to construct new defences in the rear.

* * * *

8. An attack depends on two processes—

(*a*) Blasting power and
(*b*) Moving power;

blasting power is very well provided for in the constantly improving supplies of guns and shells, but moving power is in its infancy.

9. Two things stop the offensive movement of armies—

(*a*) Bullets and fragments of shell which destroy the motive power of men, and
(*b*) The confusion of the conflict.

* * * *

The Attack by Armoured Vehicles.

15. A method of overcoming these difficulties exists. It may be shortly described as "the attack by armoured vehicles." I cannot pretend to do more than outline it and suggest it. I am not an inventor or designer. I have no means of testing and elaborating these ideas. Evidently they require study, experiment, and at least six months' preparation.

But now is the time in the winter to organize and perfect this method of attack. The "Tanks" have shown the way. But they are only a beginning.[1]

A year had passed. Nothing had been done. Mr. Asquith's Government had fallen, Mr. Montagu was at the India Office and I had succeeded his successor at the Ministry of Munitions. I had therefore the chance and the duty of giving effect in one form or another to the project of a mechanical battle which I had advocated when a private member.

In the interval the tanks had been consistently misused by the generals, and their first prestige was markedly diminished. The War Office and General Headquarters had demanded from the Ministry of Munitions guns and shells on the basis of a thirty weeks' continuous British offensive in 1918. The sketch programmes which I found upon taking office were all framed on this assumption. No one contemplated such an event as a German offensive. The only question open was what was the best method of attacking the enemy. I drew up the following paper in the light of these acceptances.[1]

To the War Cabinet.

October 21, 1917.

1. In deciding upon the Munitions Programme for 1918 the first question to be answered is, "What is the War Plan? When is it to reach its climax? Have we the possibility of winning in 1918, and if so, how are we going to do it?" . . .

2. It is obvious that the defeat and breaking-up of the German armies in the West affords the best, the simplest and the swiftest method of arriving at decisive victory. The only question is, "Have we the power to do it?" It would be a thousand pities to discard this direct and obvious method of victory in favour of weaker, more roundabout, protracted and far less decisive strategy, unless we are convinced that we have not the power to conquer on the Western Front. . . .

3. Ever since the autumn of 1914 we have heard the same accounts of the exhaustion of the enemy's man-power, of the decline of his morale, and of how near we stand, if we only make the effort, to the supreme and final result. Every year we have in consequence made exertions on the greatest possible scale, and every year the close of the campaign has seen the enemy's front, however dinted, yet unbroken. But this in itself is by no means conclusive; for the effects of our efforts upon the enemy have been cumulative, the exhaustion of his man-power and the deterioration of his morale have been

[1] The full text of this Memorandum is printed in the Appendix.

[1] The omitted paragraphs from this paper will be found in the Appendix.

progressive; our superiority in munitions of all kinds has continually augmented; the offensive power of the British army has continually increased; that of the French is still formidable.

The German armies in the West, on the other hand, appear to have completely lost their offensive power. The Germans have now been for four campaigns extended to their maximum war effort. They have maintained in continual battle upon all fronts armies of four or five millions of men. The very efficiency of their organization enabled them to strain themselves to their fullest compass from the outset, and the draft which they have made upon the life-energies of their whole nation is proportionately equal to and possibly greater than the draft which has been made upon the life-energies of France. We can measure the effect of the strain upon the French; and this affords perhaps the best guide to the actual remaining fighting power of Germany. Therefore it may well be that conclusions drawn from our disappointments in four successive campaigns would not apply to the fifth, and that the assertions and hopes that have proved unjustified in four successive campaigns might be vindicated in the end. For this reason it is imperative not to abandon the Western effort, and resign ourselves to the formidable dangers involved in the prolongation of the war into 1919, without the most searching consideration of all our resources.

4. If we are to conquer in the West, we must for that purpose provide for the concentration of all our methods of attack upon the enemy simultaneously at the decisive period. . . .

Scale and Intensity—Futility of Pure Attrition.

5. Success can only be achieved by the *scale and intensity* of our offensive effort within a limited period. We are seeking to conquer the enemy's army and not his position; and one stroke must follow another so rapidly that no breathing space for recovery or recuperation is afforded. Unless the effort reaches and is maintained at the required degree of *intensity* or on a sufficiently large scale, the campaign will be indecisive like all the others, however successful and profitable individual battles may have been. It is this principle of the intensity of the effort during a culminating period which must govern all our calculations. With armies so large as those which confront each other in the West, and with numerical superiority on our side which cannot be large, and may well be non-existent, a succession of heavy blows at intervals during the campaigning season may, however successful, result only in reciprocal losses without substantially altering the strategic situation.

A policy of pure attrition between armies so evenly balanced cannot lead to a decision. It is not a question of wearing down the enemy's reserves, but of wearing them down so rapidly that recovery and replacement of shattered divisions is impossible. In a struggle between, say, 250 divisions on one side and 200 on the other, the small margin of superiority possessed by the stronger cannot be made to tell decisively before the winter respite is reached unless the war effort of the offensive reaches a far higher degree of general intensity than has hitherto been found possible. In other words, our attack must be of such a character that a division once used up *on either side* cannot reach the battle-front again during the culminating period in time to influence the conclusion. Unless this problem can be solved satisfactorily, we shall simply be wearing each other out on a gigantic scale and with fearful sacrifices, without ever reaping the reward.

6. It is clear that in 1918 we cannot hope for any large numerical superiority in men. The relief which will be afforded . . . to the German armies in the West by the collapse of Russia must be set against the reinforcements we shall receive from the United States. I have witnessed with profound disappointment the slow and frugal development of American fighting strength in France. From the day when America entered the war, the stream of American manhood, trained, half-trained, or untrained,

to Europe should have been continuous, and all the available means of transportation should have been assembled and continually used to their utmost capacity—the men, of course, being properly trained either on one side of the Atlantic or the other.

The melancholy decision to adopt a different form of armament, both for the infantry and artillery, has also seriously retarded the development of American war power. This is now being realized by the American authorities, but too late. We cannot therefore count on any great superiority in numbers on the Western Front in 1918. Our calculations must proceed with an assumption that there will be no decisive preponderance in the number of formed divisions or in the number of men in the line or in the reserves available within the year. We are however entitled to count upon a marked and possibly increasing superiority in quality and morale. There remain in addition only the great province of war machinery and the resources of superior generalship operating through war machinery. Will these suffice?

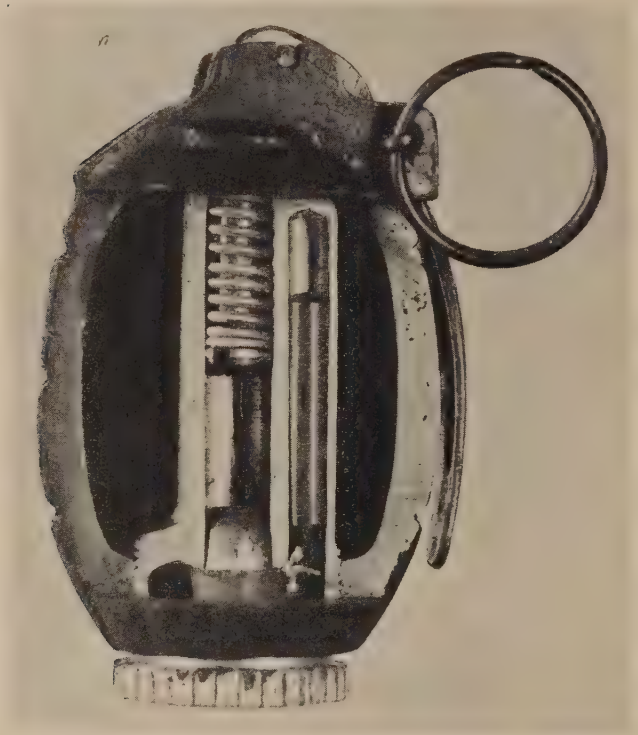


Photo: Imperial War Museum.

THE MILLS HAND GRENADE.

This, the most efficient hand grenade issued to any army during the Great War, is as simple in construction as it is deadly in use. It consists of an oval cast-iron outer casing, roughly the size of a cricket-ball. This shell is packed with ammonal, a high explosive powder, lemon-yellow in colour. Running from top to bottom of the grenade is an aluminium shaft containing the striker, the percussion cap, the fuse and the detonator. In action the sequence of events is as follows :—The grenade is held in the right hand, the lever seen on the right of the photograph being kept in place by the thumb or forefinger. The pin and ring, also seen on the right, are withdrawn with the left hand and the grenade is thrown. The lever, no longer held in place by finger or pin, flies clear. Its work, the keeping in place of the striker and spring seen in the centre of the photograph, is done. The striker is released and, driven by the spring, strikes the percussion cap. The cap ignites the fuse which after five seconds pours its tiny chain of sparks into the fulminate of mercury of the detonator. The detonator explodes and the minor shock explodes the ammonal and the bomb.

Six Forms of War Machinery.

7. There are six principal forms of machinery by which infantry on the Western Front (slightly superior in numbers, markedly superior in quality) may be aided, viz. :—

Artillery preponderance.
Air supremacy.
Railway or mechanical mobility.
Trench mortar development.
Tank development.
Gas development.

In what way can these be combined and applied by generalship so as to produce the maximum intensity of

Photo: Sport & General.

IN THE FACTORY.

Here, in a corner of a munitions factory in the North-West Munitions Area, is a pile of Mills bombs, ready for the final operation—the fitting of the aluminium base plug. This bomb was issued to the Army filled with explosive, but minus the detonator and fuse. These were supplied separately and inserted at the front.

offensive power during the culminating period? . . .

V.

25. It should not be supposed that victory in the West depends indispensably on a large superiority in numbers. When one army, partly from superiority in numbers, partly from superiority in morale, feels itself decidedly the stronger, it seeks to assume the offensive. What is lacking is an effective method of the offensive. A very large superiority in numbers would of course be one way, but we have no prospect of getting this. Three or four times the artillery we have at present would be another method; but there is no prospect of getting this in the immediate future. Still, if a means could be found whereby the stronger and better army could advance continuously *and at a sufficient speed* on a front of twenty or thirty miles, a general retirement would unquestionably be forced upon the German armies.

Blasting Power and Moving Power.

26. How then are we to find this method of continuous offensive, which is the inherent right of the stronger and better army, and the absence of which is the sole cause of the prolongation of the war? We have at present only the artillery. If you concentrate the bulk of the artillery of a great nation on a narrow battle-front and feed it with the whole industry of the people, it is possible to pound and pulverize certain areas of ground, so that a limited advance can certainly be made. But the artillery is so local in its action, so costly in its use, and so ponderous in its movement that the rate of the advance has not hitherto led to any decisive strategic results. It is clear therefore that the artillery alone is not sufficient, and will

never be sufficient, to impart to the stronger army the certain and irresistible means of advancing which it requires. It is becoming apparent that the "blasting power" of the artillery is only one of the factors required for a satisfactory method of the offensive. "Moving power" must be developed equally with "blasting power." "Moving power" deserves as sustained a study, as extensive an application, and as large a share of our resources as have hitherto been given to the "blasting power" of the artillery.

"Moving power," in the shape of railways, motor transport, light railways and tramways, has already attained large dimensions up to the edge of the battlefield; but "moving power" *on the battlefield itself* is practically limited to the arms and legs of human beings. This is not enough, and it never will be enough, and until it can be supplemented *on the battlefield* by machinery of one kind or another which can be brought into being and kept in working order in spite of intense battle conditions, the stronger army will remain robbed of its method of advance.

29. If we may assume a stronger and better army equally equipped with "blasting power" and "moving power," and capable of operating continuously on a front sufficiently broad, its success would not necessarily be dependent upon the relative numbers of troops available on either side in the whole theatre of war. Whatever his strength in other parts, the enemy would be under a continual imperative obligation of arresting this offensive movement on a given front. Someone must stop the tiger. If the rate of advance was sufficiently rapid, lack of a great superiority in numbers would not paralyse the attackers; and even bringing superior numbers to the spot would not help the defenders. For the defensive, even more than for the offensive, the numbers of men which can be usefully employed in given areas of ground is severely limited. Just as it may be said that the "intensity" of the offensive all along the front should be such as to make the whole line rock and keep the enemy in continual movement and uncertainty, so the rate of progress of the attack on the main battlefield and the obstruction of communications behind it should be sufficient to prevent reinforcement before essential points are lost.

The Fateful Issue.

30. When we see these great armies in the West spread out in thin lines hundreds of miles long and organized in depth only at very few points, it is impossible to doubt that if one side discovered, developed, and perfected a definite method of advancing continuously, albeit upon a fairly limited front, a decisive defeat would be inflicted upon the other. If therefore we could by organized mechanical processes and equipment impart this faculty to our armies in 1918 or in 1919, it would be an effective substitute for a great numerical preponderance in numbers. What other substitute can we look for? Where else is our superiority coming from?

31. A survey of these mechanical possibilities together with a computation of our resources compared to those of the enemy should afford the best means of judging the fateful question already postulated, viz., whether we have the means of overthrowing finally the enemy's main armies on the Western Front during the campaign of 1918. . . .